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Shutdown Ends, DHS Funding Passed

The longest partial shutdown in U.S. history ended April 30 after the House passed funding for most of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Senate had previously passed the funding package, and President Donald Trump signed it into law.

The legislation funded most components of the United States Department of Homeland Security, excluding U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

The funding bill was debated in the context of immigration enforcement policy. Proposed changes to enforcement tactics were not included in the final measure.

During the shutdown, some Transportation Security Administration workers reported absences related to missed paychecks. In late March, Trump directed that airport screeners be paid using alternative funds.

The White House stated that those funds were nearing depletion and that workers could miss pay without additional congressional action. Funding for ICE and Border Patrol operations had been provided through prior legislation.

House Republicans advanced a budget plan to allocate additional funding for immigration enforcement activities.

House Speaker Mike Johnson stated that TSA workers would receive paychecks and that further funding measures would be addressed in a subsequent session.

Some lawmakers proposed restrictions on ICE enforcement practices, including limits on the use of masks and requirements for judicial warrants for entry into private homes. These provisions were not included in the enacted legislation.

The administration did not adopt the proposed changes to ICE enforcement practices.



Cargo Thefts Decline

Cargo theft activity in the first quarter showed mixed trends, with changes in tactics and participants reported by industry sources.

Verisk CargoNet reported that cargo theft incidents increased 7.4% year over year to 596 cases in the United States and Canada, compared to 555 incidents in the same period the previous year. Total supply chain crime activity declined 5.3% to 767 events and decreased 12.2% from the fourth quarter. Estimated losses totaled \$131.58 million, similar to the prior year.

Verisk CargoNet stated that organized criminal groups are playing a larger role in cargo theft and are targeting goods that can be resold through online channels.

The report identified geographic shifts in theft activity, including declines in parts of Texas and the Southeast and continued or increased activity linked to organized groups in California and the New York City metropolitan area.

Industry anti-fraud tools have led to changes in criminal tactics, including increased use of credential theft and carrier impersonation.

A separate 2025 Cargo Theft Report by BSI Consulting and TT Club found that trucking accounted for approximately 70% of cargo theft incidents globally.

The report indicated that theft activity involves multiple points in the supply chain, including parking areas, rest stops, and digital freight platforms.

Industry data shows a shift from localized theft activity prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to involvement by organized criminal networks using coordinated methods.

Transported Asset Protection Association reported geographic expansion of cargo theft activity beyond traditional areas such as California, Texas, and New Jersey, with increased activity in the Northeast involving organized groups targeting specific types of freight, including food and consumer goods.

Overhaul reported that cargo theft patterns have evolved, with activity no longer following previous seasonal trends and involving a broader range of methods.

U.S. Economy Expands, GDP Grows 2% In Q1, Recovering From Shutdown

The U.S. economy expanded at a 2% annualized rate in the first quarter of 2026, according to the Commerce Department's April 30 report. Gross domestic product (GDP) increased after a 0.5% gain in the final quarter of 2025.

Federal government spending and investment grew at a 9.3% annual rate, contributing to overall growth after declining in the previous quarter.

Consumer spending, which accounts for about 70% of economic activity, rose at a 1.6% rate, down from 1.9% in the prior quarter. Spending on goods declined slightly, while service spending slowed.

Business investment increased at an 8.7% annual rate. Residential investment fell at an 8% annual rate for the fifth consecutive quarterly decline. Nonresidential investment rose 10.4%, the largest increase in nearly three years.

Imports increased at a 21.4% annual rate, reducing GDP growth by more than 2.6 percentage points.

Energy markets were affected by disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, through which a significant share of global oil and liquefied natural gas is transported. Energy price increases contributed to higher inflation, according to the Federal Reserve, which cited uncertainty related to the situation when it held interest rates steady on April 29.

The April 30 GDP report was the first of three estimates issued by the Commerce Department for the quarter.



Expanded ID Checks Target Fraud, Strengthen Database Security

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has begun a new identity-verification system for its Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse to improve security and accuracy in tracking commercial drivers who are prohibited from operating due to drug or alcohol violations.

The system is being implemented in phases through Idemia, a verification provider also used by the Department of Homeland Security.

Beginning April 27, new users in several categories—including employers without portal accounts, third-party administrators, medical review officers, substance abuse professionals, and assistants—must verify identity using government ID scanning or facial recognition through a mobile application.

The system automatically imports identification data, and users cannot edit it. Verification applies to new users, while drivers have been verified since the Clearinghouse launched. Users who cannot complete verification online may use enrollment centers or contact FMCSA support.

No date has been set for a second phase.



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Oil Pipeline To Run From Canada To United States

President Donald Trump granted approval April 30 for a new oil pipeline from Canada into the United States.

The 3-foot-wide Bridger Pipeline Expansion would carry up to 550,000 barrels of oil per day from Canada through Montana and Wyoming, where it would connect with another pipeline.

The pipeline requires additional state and federal environmental approvals before construction can begin.

At peak volume, the 650-mile pipeline would transport about two-thirds the capacity of the Keystone XL pipeline, which was partially constructed before President Joe Biden canceled its permit in 2021.

Trump stated that the current administration is approving pipeline projects, unlike the previous administration.

Trump approved the Keystone XL project in 2020. The permit was later canceled in 2021.

The Bridger Pipeline Expansion would not cross any Native American reservations.

More than 70% of the pipeline would be built within existing pipeline corridors and 80% on private land, according to Bridger Pipeline LLC. The pipeline would carry various grades of crude oil, including oil from Canada's oil sands region, for export or refining in the United States.

The permit also authorizes transport of petroleum products including gasoline, kerosene, diesel, and liquefied petroleum gas.

Bridger Pipeline LLC plans to begin construction in 2027, with completion targeted for 2028 or 2029.

Subsidiaries of True Companies have been involved in multiple pipeline spills, including a 2015 crude oil spill into the Yellowstone River, a 2022 diesel spill in Wyoming, and a 2016 crude oil spill in North Dakota that affected the Little Missouri River.

Subsidiaries of True Companies agreed to pay a \$12.5 million civil penalty to settle a federal lawsuit related to the North Dakota and Montana spills.

The company has implemented an AI-based leak detection system and plans to install sections of the pipeline 30 to 40 feet beneath major rivers, including the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers.

Bridger Pipeline LLC operates more than 3,700 miles of gathering and transmission pipelines in the Williston Basin of North Dakota and Montana and the Powder River Basin of Wyoming.

Environmental groups opposing the project include the Montana Environmental Information Center, WildEarth Guardians, and Earthjustice.

Earthjustice attorney Jenny Harbine stated that pipeline projects involve risks of leaks and spills.



School Bus Alcohol Detection Systems Proposed

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) reviewed school bus safety after a West Virginia crash involving an impaired driver that injured 19 children.

The NTSB found additional cases involving impaired school bus operation and recommended that all new school buses include alcohol detection systems that can prevent operation if impairment is detected.

The agency did not provide cost estimates.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data shows alcohol contributes to about one-third of traffic fatalities annually.

Between 2020 and 2024, 407 school bus drivers were involved in fatal crashes, with two testing positive for alcohol. Most fatalities in school bus crashes occur in other vehicles, and 113 school bus passengers were killed between 2013 and 2023.

A 2020 report identified 118 school bus drivers cited or arrested for suspected DUI over five years. The NTSB has also recommended seat belt use on school buses.

Port Activity January, 2026

PORT VOLUMES	TEUs Processed MARCH 2026	TEUs Processed MARCH 2025	% ↑ ↓ Year-Over-Year
Port of Los Angeles	752,520	778,403	-3.33%
Port of Long Beach	774,935	817,457	-5.20%
NW Seaport Alliance (Seattle/Tacoma)	278,829	309,993	-10.05%
Port Houston	391,037	386,864	1.08%
SC Port Authority (Charleston)	218,673	240,857	-9.21%
Port of Oakland	198,667	217,415	-8.62%
Port of Virginia	279,514	315,000	-11.27%
Georgia Ports Authority	475,000	532,000	-10.71%
Port Authority of NY & NJ reports its volume one month behind other ports	PANYNJ TEUs Processed In FEBRUARY		
	730,000	715,000	2.10%
TOTAL PORT VOLUMES	4,099,175	4,312,989	-4.96%

March, 2026: Tonnage, Trailer Orders, Medium Duty Sales, Class 8 Orders/Sales, Used Trucks, Economy, Manufacturing

TONNAGE: Freight tonnage posted its largest year-over-year gain in more than three years in March while also delivering the best quarterly result in almost a decade, according to the American Trucking Associations reported April 21. The ATA For-Hire Truck Tonnage Index increased 0.3% sequentially to 117 from 116.6. The results also marked a 3% increase from 2025.

TRAILER ORDERS: U.S. trailer orders showed a sequential gain that defied seasonal expectations, given the historically expected slowdown that started around March. ACT Research reported preliminary net data showed orders decreased 14% year over year to 18,800 units but were 42% above February's level. The report noted a sequential drop in net orders is typical as the annual order cycle enters its weakest months. This time, the cycle seems delayed a few months.

MEDIUM DUTY SALES: U.S. medium-duty truck sales fell below the previous year for the 14th consecutive month in March, according to data from Omdia Automotive. Classes 4-7 retail truck sales for the month decreased 14.7% to 17,019 from the 19,942 units reported during the prior-year period. The most recent year-over-year increase occurred in January 2025. But the result also showed a 25.2% sequential increase from 13,591 units.

CLASS 8 ORDERS: North American Class 8 truck orders increased more than 100% year over year for the second consecutive month in March. ACT Research preliminary data showed orders surged 126% from the prior year to 37,200. But the similarly strong performance in February meant orders declined 19.5% sequentially from 46,200. The results also marked the fourth straight month that outpaced the prior year.

CLASS 8 SALES: U.S. Class 8 retail sales in March fell 20% from 2025, marking the ninth consecutive year-over-year decrease. Omdia Automotive data showed March sales decreased to 14,952 units from 18,682 the prior year but increased 15.1% sequentially from 12,992. Year to date, sales dropped 20.5% to 40,230 from 50,627 units.

USED TRUCKS: Used Class 8 truck sales came in slightly below seasonal expectations in March, while still above the prior year and month. ACT Research reported that sales increased 10.2% to 24,900 units from 22,600 the prior year. Sales were also 9.8% above the 22,700 units in February. The report found that same-dealer used-truck retail sales built on momentum from the prior month. Those figures exceeded seasonal expectations, resulting in a significant sequential gain for same-dealer used retail sales.

ECONOMY: Federal Reserve officials left interest rates unchanged but revealed a deepening division over the outlook for policy amid increased uncertainty caused by the conflict in the Middle East. Four officials voted against the decision, including three who objected to language in their post-meeting statement that suggested the central bank would eventually resume cutting rates.

MANUFACTURING: This year's U.S. manufacturing expansion extended into April even as the Iran war drove input prices sharply higher. The Institute for Supply Management's gauge of prices paid for manufacturing inputs climbed for a fourth straight month to a four-year high of 84.6, according to data released May 1. The group's measure of overall factory activity held steady at 52.7, matching the highest level since 2022. Readings above 50 indicate growth.

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