

The background features a dark teal color with a grid pattern. Overlaid on this are several financial charts. In the upper half, there are candlestick charts with white bodies and black wicks. Some candles have small black triangles above or below them. In the lower half, there are blue bar charts with white outlines. Scattered throughout the background are various numbers and percentages in a light blue font, such as '432434', '433411', '234223', '+2,53%', '-0,35%', '+0,66%', '-0,44%', '-0,61%', and '343223'.

WJ Charts of the Month

February 2025

WJ Interests
WEALTH ADVISORS

WJ Charts of the Month Intro

"WJ Charts of the Month" is a comprehensive monthly slide deck designed to showcase recent significant financial events and data. The presentation is organized into four sections, beginning with a "Highlights" slide that sets the stage for the subsequent content.

1. What Happened Last Month: This section features a curated collection of charts and images from various publications, offering a visual summary of the previous month's key events.

2. WJ State of the Economy: Our team at WJ has created an array of charts to emphasize crucial economic factors and trends.

3. WJ State of the Markets: Similarly, this section comprises a series of charts crafted by WJ to provide an overview of the core markets we monitor.

We strive to maintain consistency across the charts to facilitate easy comparison month-over-month. However, we may adjust or emphasize specific charts if their relevance shifts over time.

Our objective with this publication is to establish a "One-Stop Shop" for the most vital financial information, presented in a concise and easily digestible format. **We value your feedback to help us achieve this goal.** If you have suggestions regarding the format, or if there's particular information you'd like to see in future editions, please don't hesitate to let us know.

Highlights

Tariffs!!!

Economic Weakness?

Rates Headed Lower

The Housing Market is Stuck

The Bright Side

What Happened

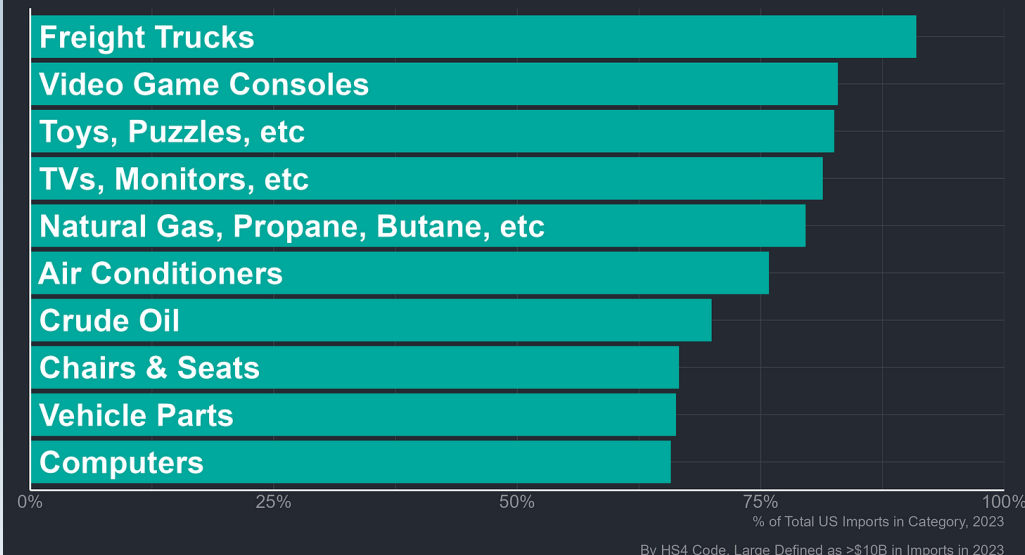
Tariffs Go into Full Effect

After a short delay, 25% tariffs on Mexico and Canada have gone into effect, as well as an additional 10% (on top of the previous 10%) tariff on China. Additional reciprocal tariffs are expected to follow on April 2nd on other trading partners such as the European Union.

These have been met with retaliatory tariffs. China announced a variety of tariffs on agricultural products set to go into effect March 10th. Canada is imposing 25% on US Goods and Mexico announced new tariffs to be detailed on March 9th. The fact that these retaliations have a “ramping up” period shows hope that they are still trying to work out some sort of deal.

There are a handful of other tariffs that are expected to occur soon which are illustrated by the table to the right. Tariffs without a doubt come with price increases across the board. That’s the intention. The potential “silver lining” is increased production domestically, however many things can’t be made in the U.S. that are produced abroad.

Major Goods Where a Large % of US Imports Come From Canada, Mexico, & China



Trump Tariffs So Far

Effective Date*	Target Countries	Tariff Rate	Goods Targeted	Bloomberg Economics Forecast	Retaliation?
2/4/25	China	10%	All	Hike nearly as large as Trade War I, impact manageable	Restrained
3/4/25	China	Another 10%	All	Hike close to twice Trade War I, risks more than 50% drop in China exports to US	Undetermined
3/4/25	Canada, Mexico	25%, but 10% for Canadian energy	Most	Risks 1% hit to US GDP, severe shock to Mexico and Canada	Pledged
3/12/25	Major exporters	25%	Steel, aluminum	Marginal impact on US. Canada exposed	Pledged
4/2/25	European Union	25%	All	Risks 70% cut in EU exports to the US - hitting 1.5% of EU GDP	Threatened
4/2/25	Major exporters	25%	Cars, chips, pharma	Awaiting details	Undetermined
4/2/25	All	Unspecified recipricols vs VAT, other barriers	Undetermined	Matching VAT and non tariff measures would be a major shock	Undetermined
11/22/25	Major exporters	Unspecified	Copper	Marginal impact on US. Chile, Canada most exposed	Undetermined
12/31/25	EU, UK, Canada	Unspecified vs digital taxes	Undetermined	Awaiting details	Undetermined

Source: Bloomberg

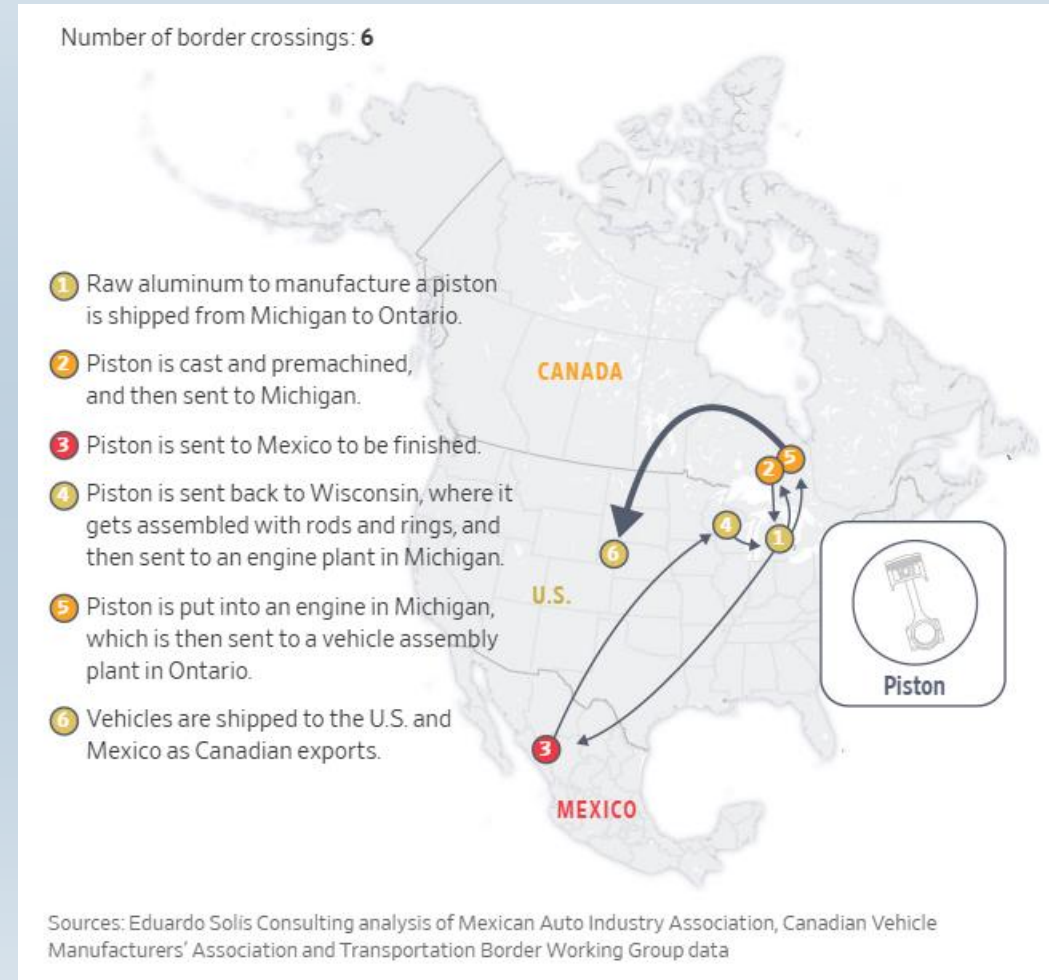
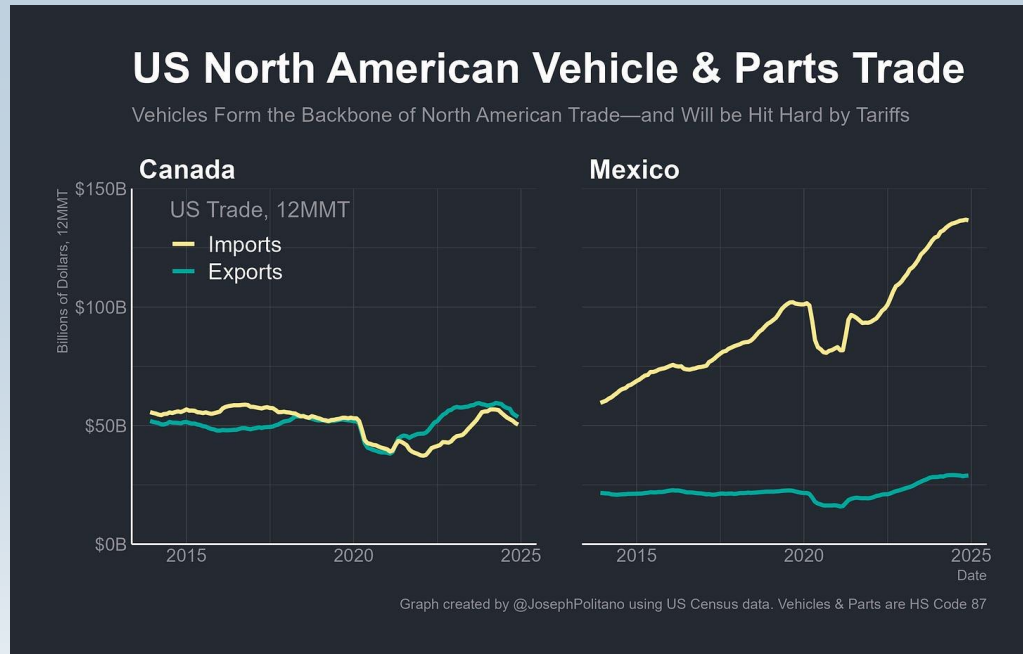
Note: Future dates subject to change; for tariffs targeting digital taxes, date hasn't yet been set yet.

Autos Especially Impacted

One of the most affected goods will be cars and trucks. North America produced about 16 million cars in 2023 and are assembled using parts from all 3 countries. The graphic shows an example of how many times cars cross one of the borders during its production. A study by the Anderson Economic Group expects auto prices to increase between \$6,000-\$12,000, depending on the size of the vehicle. Kelley Blue Book similarly predicts a rise between \$3,000 and \$10,000.

This is only true for American made vehicles. Foreign vehicles would either be tarified once on the finished product, or don't have a tariff yet like in Japan.

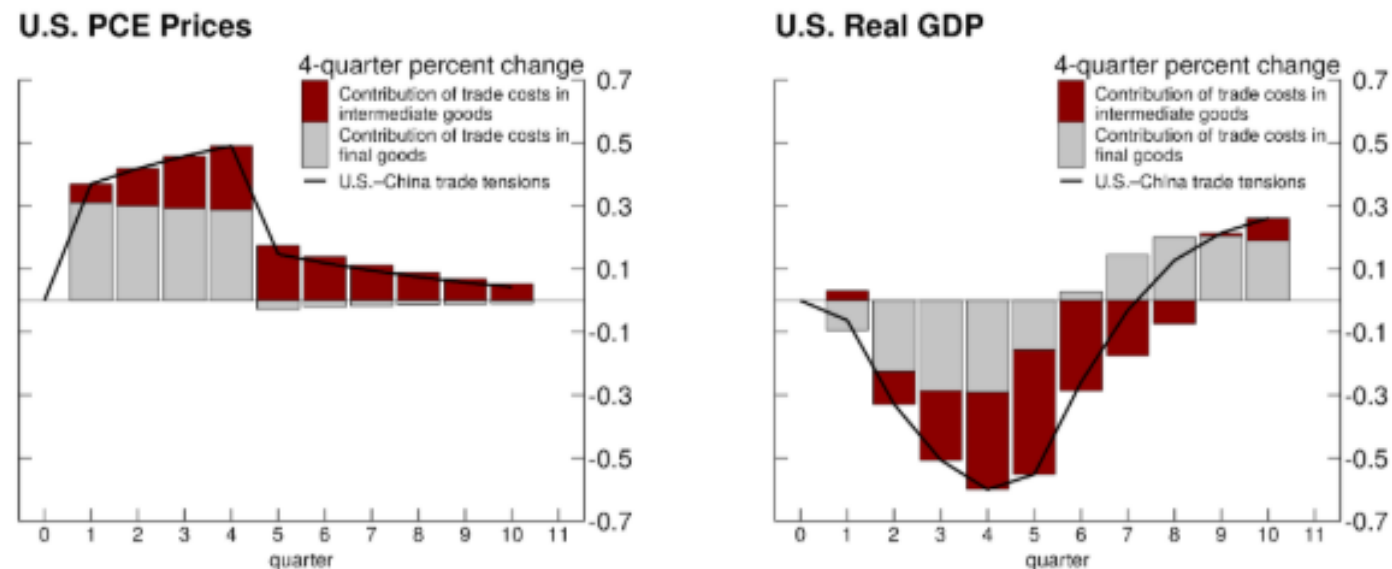
Ford CEO Jim Farley recently said, "Long term, a 25% tariff across the Mexico and Canada borders would blow a hole in the U.S. industry that we've never seen. Frankly, it gives free rein to South Korean, Japanese and European companies that are bringing 1.5 million to 2 million vehicles into the U.S. that wouldn't be subject to those Mexican and Canadian tariffs. It would be one of the biggest windfalls for those companies ever."



Tariff Effect on GDP/Inflation

The Federal Reserve (US Central Bank) recently wrote a research note on the forecasted effect of the China Tariffs alone. They predict an increase in inflation of about .5%. The big issue isn't in buying finished goods (products ready for consumption) but in intermediate goods, which are the inputs in the production of other goods. Think electronic components, textiles, chemicals, raw materials, etc. They also expect a decrease in GDP by a similar amount as consumers purchase less of the higher priced goods. In addition, as firms switch to higher-cost alternatives, efficiency drops, causing lower production.

Figure 4. Effects of U.S.–China Trade Tensions

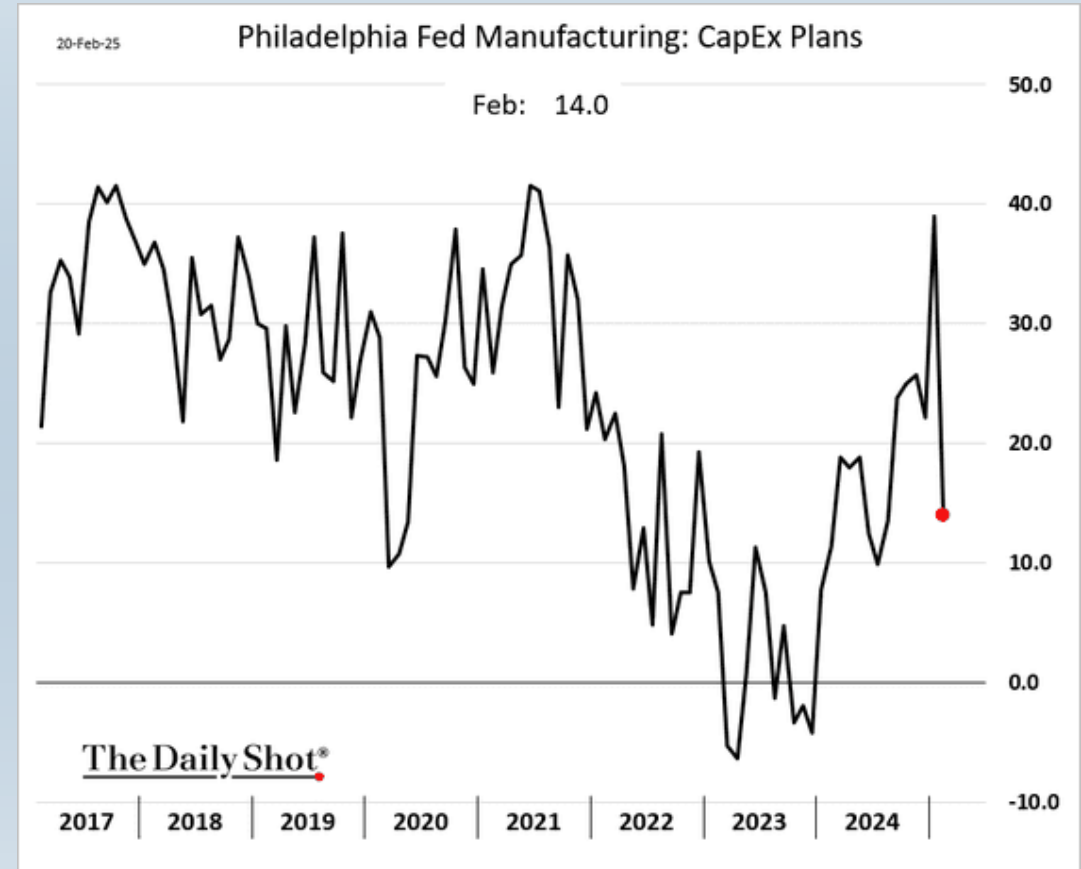


Note: Results are shown as deviations from a baseline in which trade costs do not increase. PCE is personal consumption expenditures.

Source: FRB staff calculations.

Inflation Up, Production Down

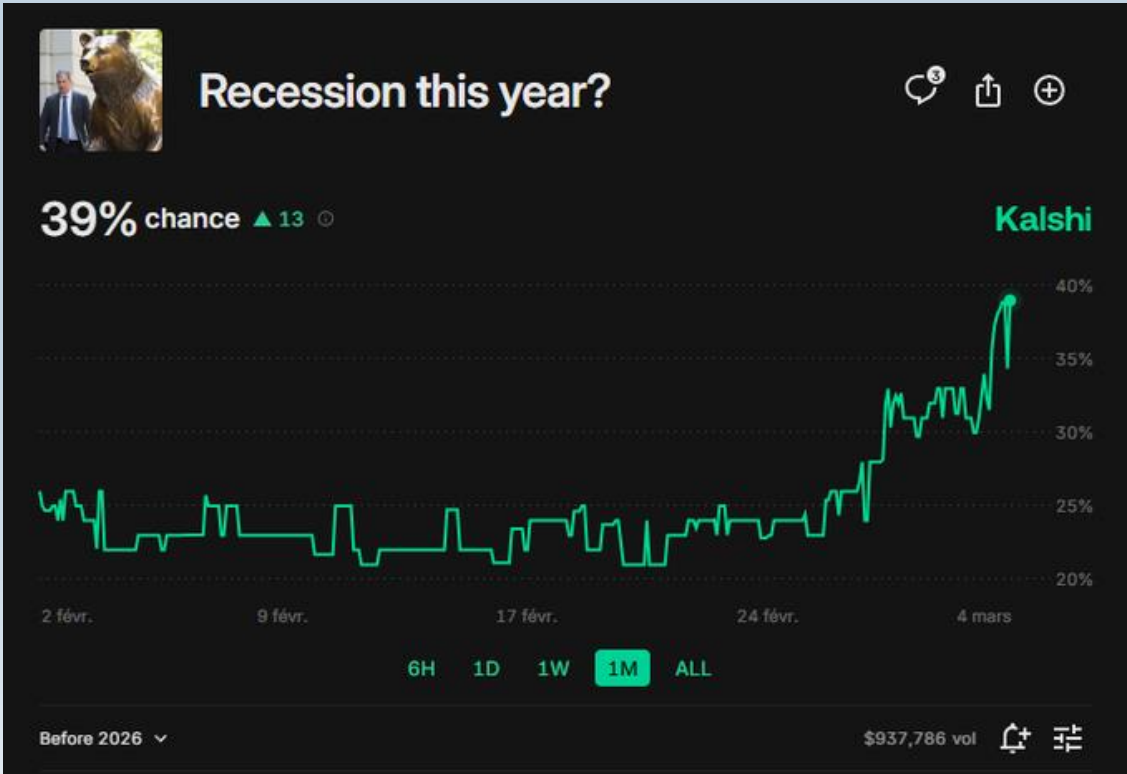
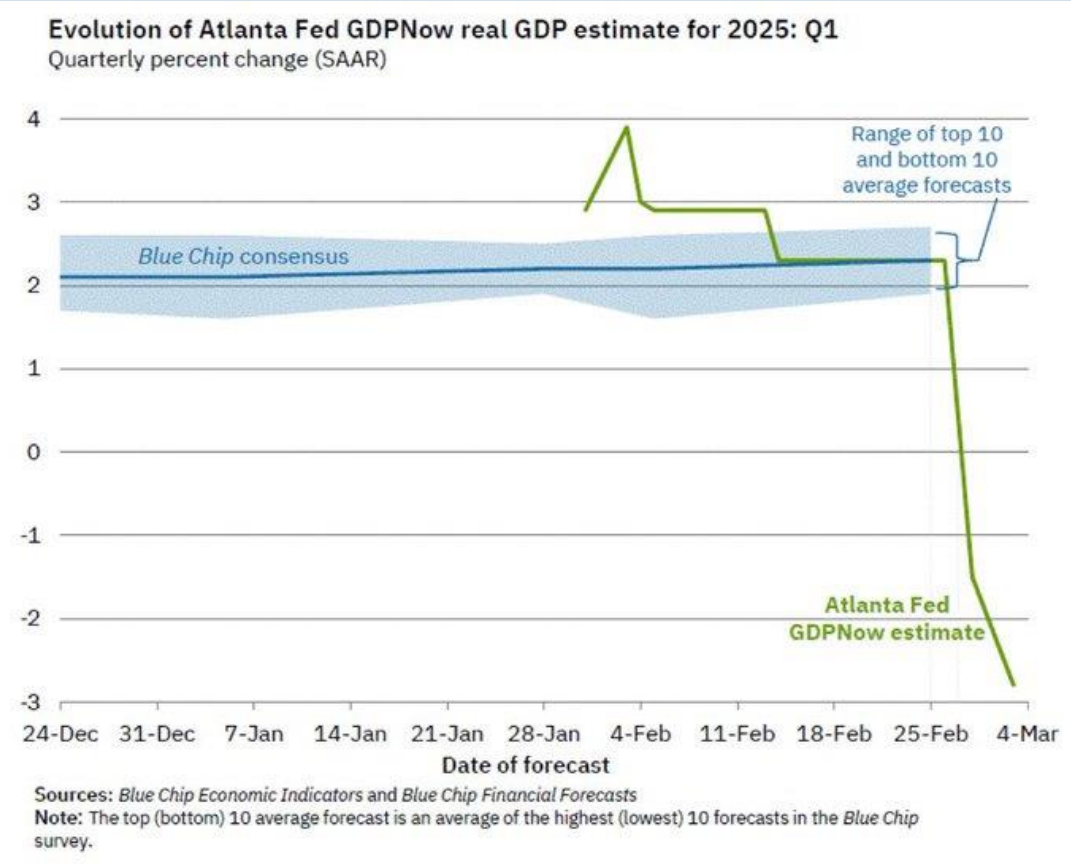
This is already reflected across many economic surveys. For example, below are 1 year inflation expectations, which have spiked. Next to that are Manufacturing Capital Expenditure plans, which are crashing.



Recession Risk is Rising

The left chart shows the GDPNow forecast for Q1 GDP. It updates as new data comes in and has a good track record. The last two updates were major surprises, as forecasted GDP went from positive 3% earlier this month, to nearly -3%.

Much of the downward move is from accelerated imports trying to front run the tariffs, which makes the trade deficit larger, and thus GDP lower. That would be a temporary shock. However, reductions in consumer spending and weak construction data in January led it another leg lower. The chart below is from an online betting site, Kalshi, and shows the odds bettors are placing on a recession this year.



Employment Situation Softening as Well

Consumer surveys are starting to reflect pessimism in the job market, with the number of respondents expecting fewer jobs going forward rising (green).

This is being reflected in the initial jobless claims as well (people filing for unemployment the first time). The pickup in new applications coincides with several staff-reduction plans at high-profile corporations such as Starbucks Corp., Meta Platforms Inc. and Southwest Airlines Co.

Economists have also been on the lookout out for the ripple effects from the firings of workers across federal agencies by DOGE.

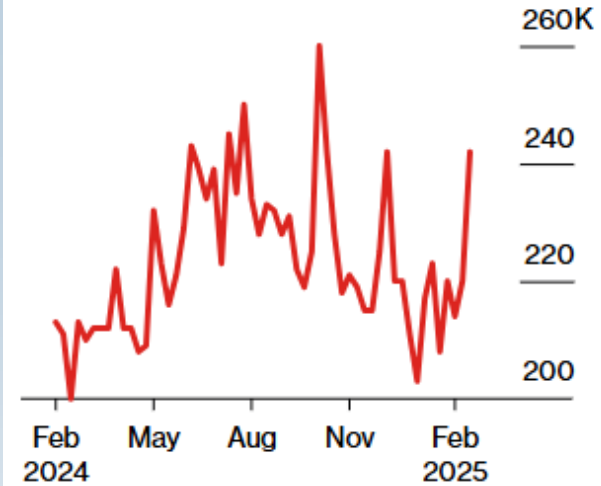
Consumers expecting fewer jobs available going forward



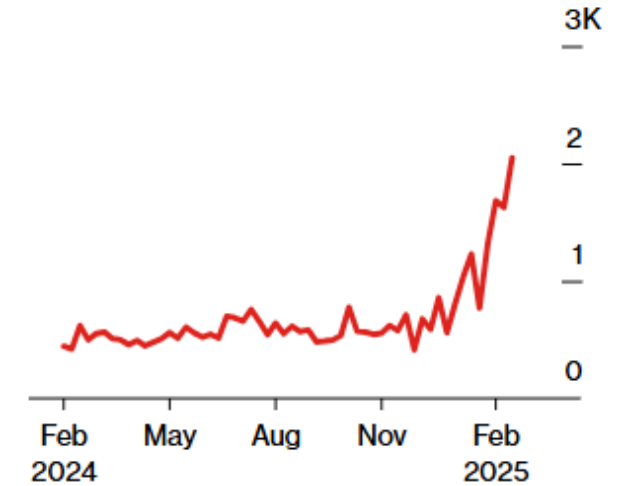
US Initial Jobless Claims Increase to Highest Level This Year

Applications in Washington, DC, continued to rise

Initial jobless claims in US



Initial jobless claims in Washington, DC



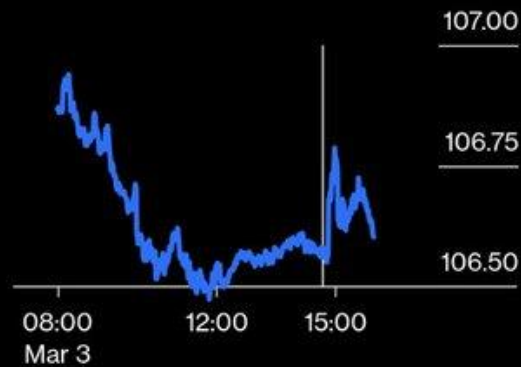
Source: US Labor Department

Markets are Responding

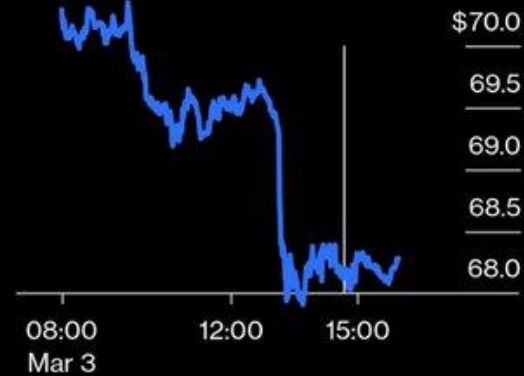
Markets Prepare for Tariff Tuesday

Lower yields and oil prices help the administration. Not so lower stocks

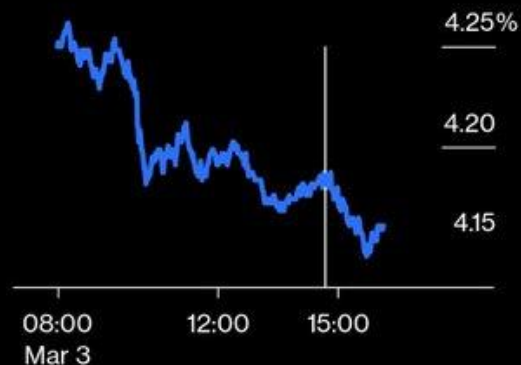
DXY Dollar Index



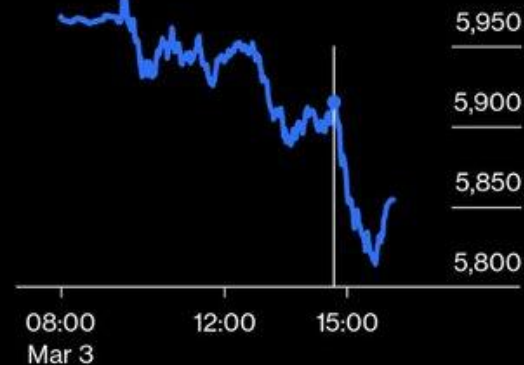
WTI Crude



10-Year Treasury Yield



S&P 500 Cash



Source: Bloomberg

Bloomberg Opinion

The effect isn't just felt in economic data, but in financial markets as well. US stocks have sold off in the days leading up to the start of tariffs. The S&P 500 has now completely erased all gains since the election, wiping out \$3.4 trillion in market value.

There are some bright spots. The bottom left of the chart shows the 10-year treasury yield falling. This causes bond prices to go up, so a balanced portfolio is protected by much of the stock volatility. You don't necessarily want the 10-year yield falling for the wrong reasons (lower growth), but this is a positive in most portfolios.

In addition, oil is starting to fall rapidly. This is likely to be more related to various OPEC countries announcing raises in oil production. They will be adding about 2 million barrels a day starting in April. This is great for consumers and helps to lower inflation. On the other hand, this will make American oil producers reluctant to increase production.

Interest Rates are Heading Lower

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has made it very clear that he is focused on getting the 10-year treasury yield down. This is the benchmark interest rate everyone looks at, and has influence over key borrowing rates like mortgage, auto, or credit card loans. I'm not sure his intention was for it to lower on recession risk, but it is coming down, and you can already see it in mortgage rates, which are down half a percent in the last month.

Also, you may recall lots of discussion around the Fed cutting rates over the last couple of years. Since September last year, they've cut about 1%. The market no longer believed they were going to continue cutting much this year, until last week. All of a sudden, the market expects 3 cuts, up from 1. This will also provide some relief to borrowers, however it'll make your cash holdings less attractive.

Mortgage News Daily - Rate Index

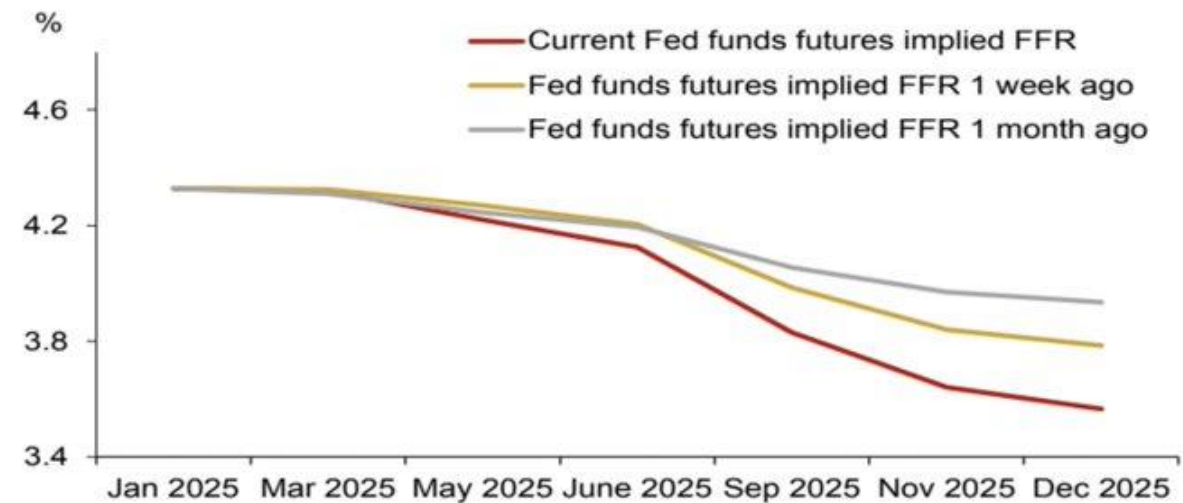
Frequency: **Daily** | Data Source: Mortgage News Daily

The MND Rate Index is the best way to follow day-to-day movement in mortgage rates. Our index is driven by real-time changes in actual lender rate sheets. This has two **huge advantages**, timeliness and accuracy. [Read more below](#)

Average Rates	Current	Change				52 Week Range	
		1 day	1 week	1 month	1 year	Low	High
30 Yr. Fixed	6.64%	-0.10% ↓	-0.16% ↓	-0.41% ↓	-0.45% ↓	6.11%	7.52%
15 Yr. Fixed	6.14%	-0.09% ↓	-0.11% ↓	-0.31% ↓	-0.44% ↓	5.54%	6.91%
30 Yr. FHA	6.08%	-0.05% ↓	-0.08% ↓	-0.38% ↓	-0.49% ↓	5.65%	7.00%
30 Yr. Jumbo	6.95%	-0.10% ↓	-0.15% ↓	-0.39% ↓	-0.43% ↓	6.37%	7.68%
7/6 SOFR ARM	6.25%	-0.07% ↓	-0.43% ↓	-0.61% ↓	-0.45% ↓	5.95%	7.55%
30 Yr. VA	6.10%	-0.06% ↓	-0.09% ↓	-0.38% ↓	-0.49% ↓	5.66%	7.03%

Last Updated: 3/4/25

CHART 1: MARKETS NOW EXPECT 3 FED RATE CUTS IN REST OF THE YEAR

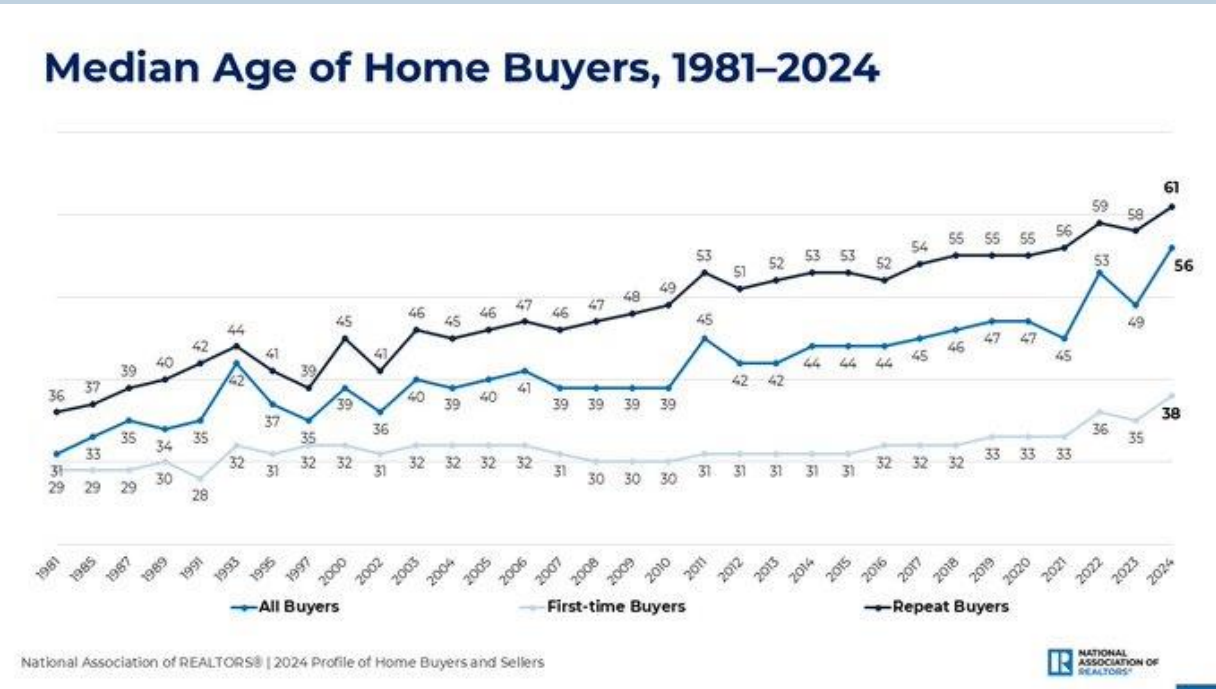


Source: Bloomberg, MUFG GMR

The Housing Market Needs the Help

Potential Homebuyers are begging for relief in the form of lower interest rates. The housing market is essentially closed. Pending home sales are the lowest they've ever been, lower than 2008 AND the depths of the pandemic in 2020. Buying a home is simply too expensive with home prices where they are, as well as mortgage rates.

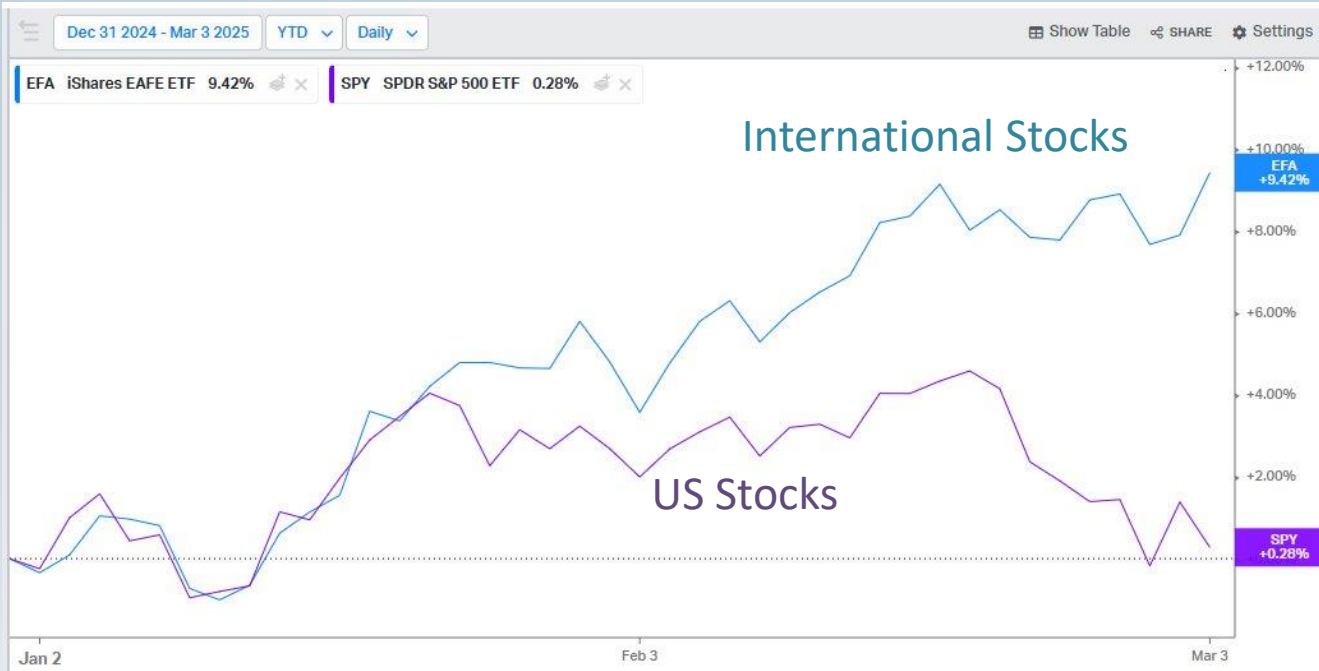
This is especially impactful to younger home buyers. The chart on the right shows that the median age of a first-time home buyer is now 38, up from 33 just 4 short years ago. The median age of all home buyers is now at 56 years old, up from around 40 in the 2010s.



Stock Winners are Rotating

For the first time in a long time, stock markets outside of the US are starting to shine, particularly Europe. The chart below shows international developed stocks outperforming US stocks by nearly 9%. These stocks are much cheaper than US stocks, so if they continue to gain momentum, this could greatly benefit diversified portfolios.

In addition, it's no longer the Mag 7 that are carrying the entire weight of the index. Other companies are starting to perform better. The chart on the right shows how the rest of the S&P 500 is finally beating the Mag 7. This is a short time period to be fair but would be a welcome change for managers who pick stocks based on valuation.



The Magnificent Seven versus the market

How Wall Street's heavyweights compare to the rest of the market year to date



The Magnificent Seven represents the combined market capitalizations of Microsoft, Apple, Alphabet, Amazon, Nvidia, Meta Platforms and Tesla.

By Reuters • Source: LSEG

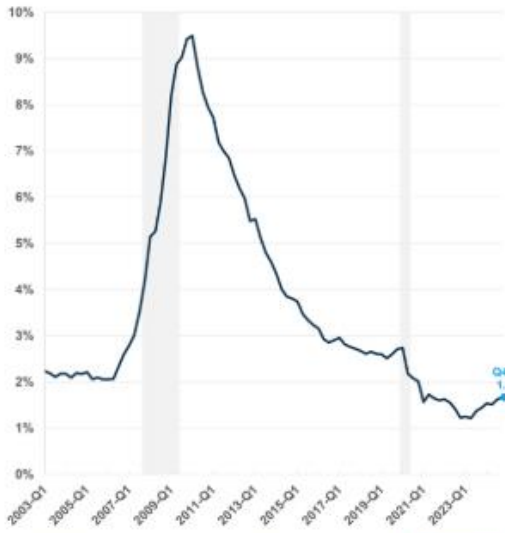
On the Bright Side

On the bright side, the consumer is still relatively strong. Below are a series of charts showing different aspects of that. Mainly, it shows that debt levels relative to income are on the lower side. Homeowners especially are in a strong position, as they have record amounts of equity in their homes, and currently aren't tapping it. A point of caution is the bottom right chart, showing credit card delinquencies. Overall credit card usage rates aren't too bad relative to history, but you are seeing a rise in delinquencies.

Not shown are corporate credit spreads, which are a measure of corporations' credit health. They are near historic lows, meaning the market sees very little chance of trouble in the near future in terms of being able to cover their debts. Things can always change, but at least for now those will help support markets and the economy.

Big picture: delinquencies are low relative to incomes

Overall Debt Balances Seriously Delinquent (90+ Days)
Percent of Disposable Income

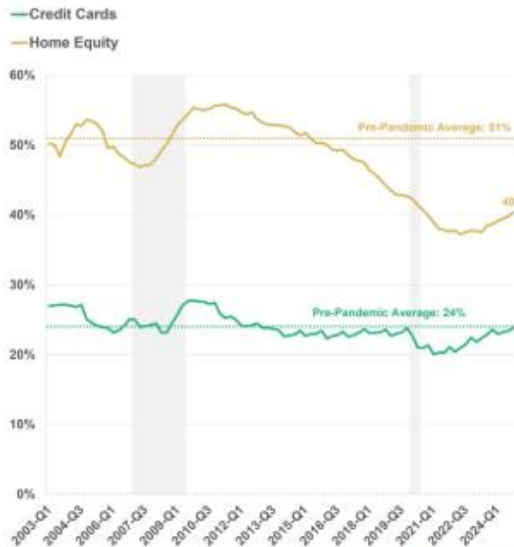


Data source: Carson Investment Research, FRED 02/18/2025
Shaded area shows U.S. recessions



Consumers yet to stretch their borrowing capacity

Credit Utilization Rate (Percent of Available Credit)

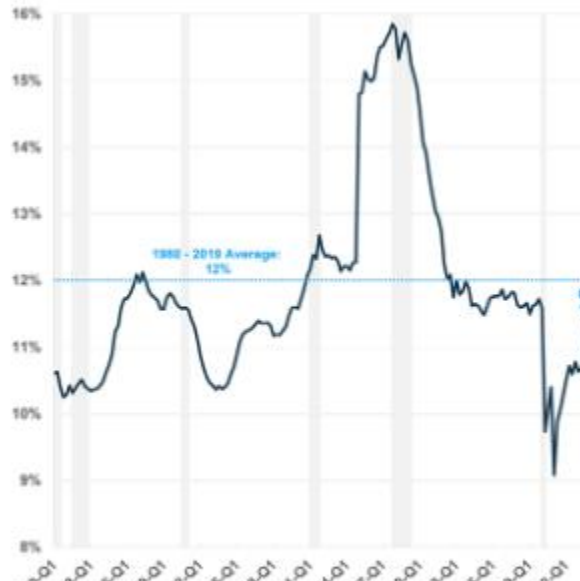


Data source: Carson Investment Research, NY Fed 02/18/2025
Shaded area shows U.S. recession



Debt service much less of a burden now

Household Debt Service Payments
(Percent of Disposable Personal Income)

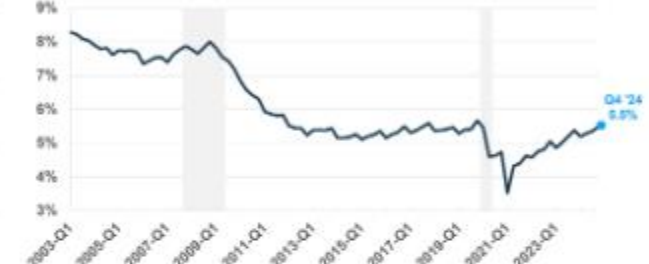


Data source: Carson Investment Research, FRED 02/18/2025
Shaded area shows U.S. recessions

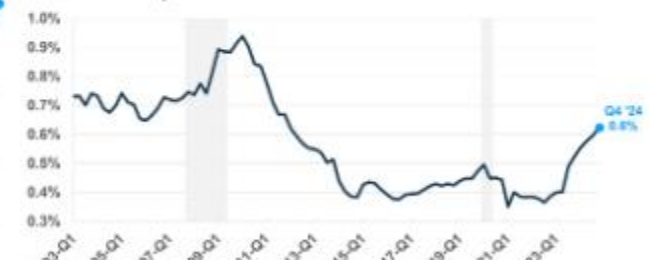


Not a lot of debt, but delinquencies rising from low levels

Credit Card Debt
As Percent of Disposable Income



Credit Card Delinquencies (90+ Days)
As Percent of Disposable Income



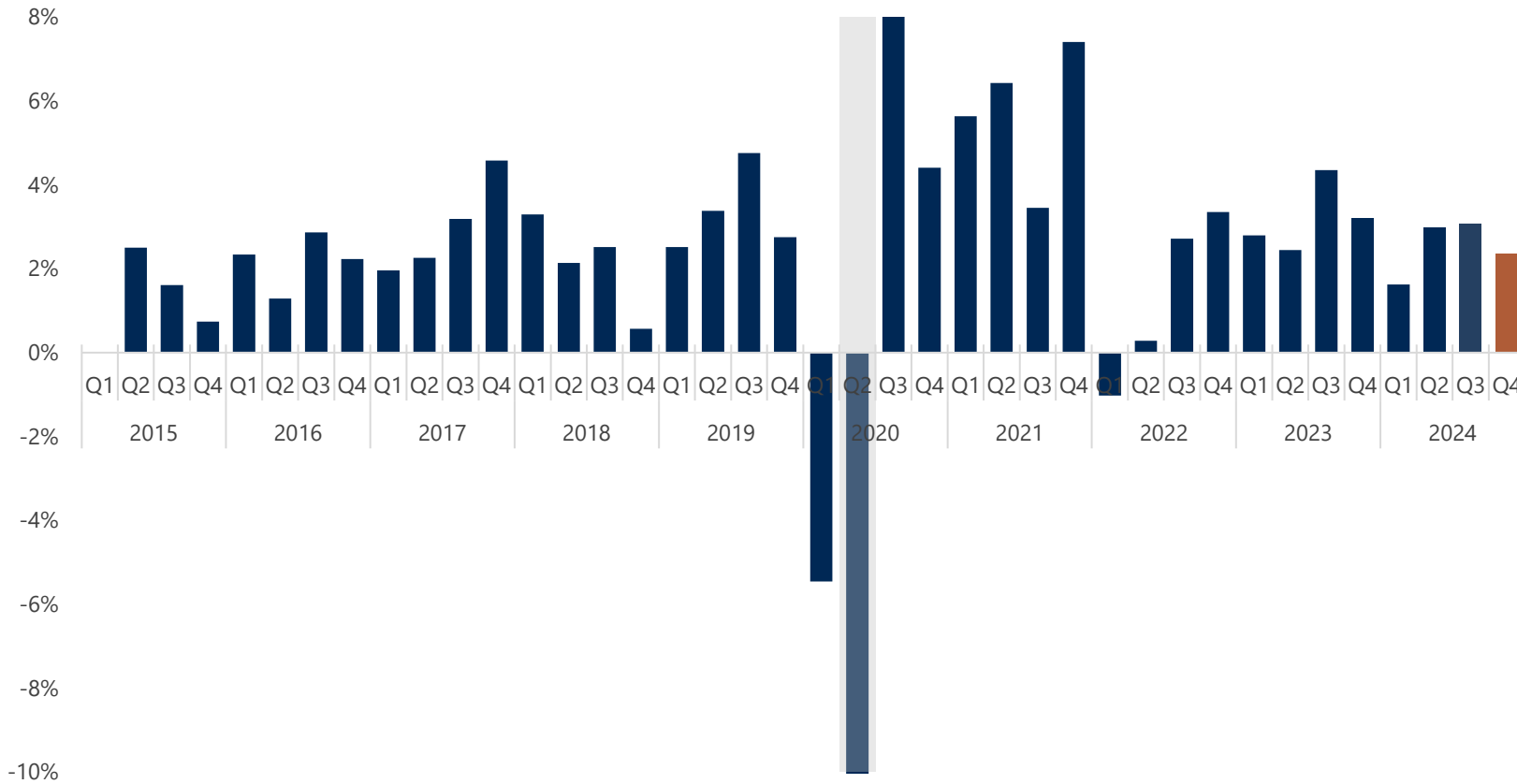
Data source: Carson Investment Research, FRED 02/18/2025
Shaded area shows U.S. recessions



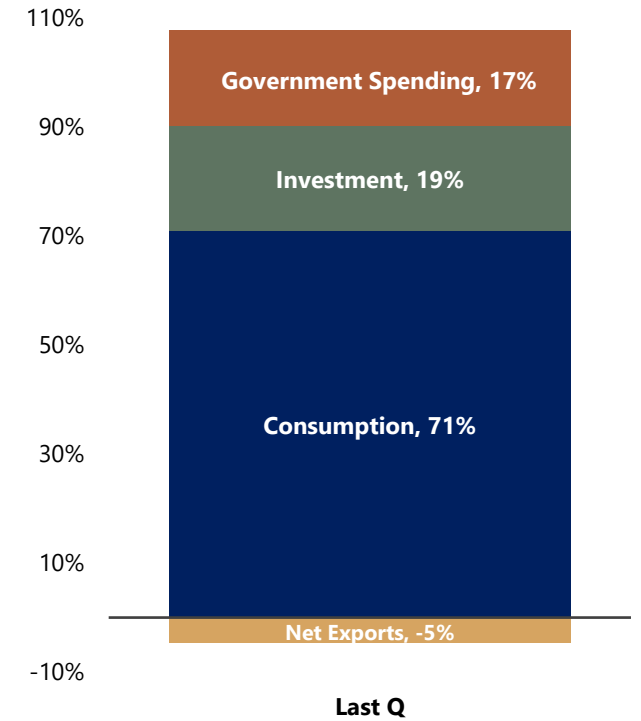
WJ State of the Economy

Q4 GDP was 2.3%, 2.8% for the Year

Annualized Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) % Chg

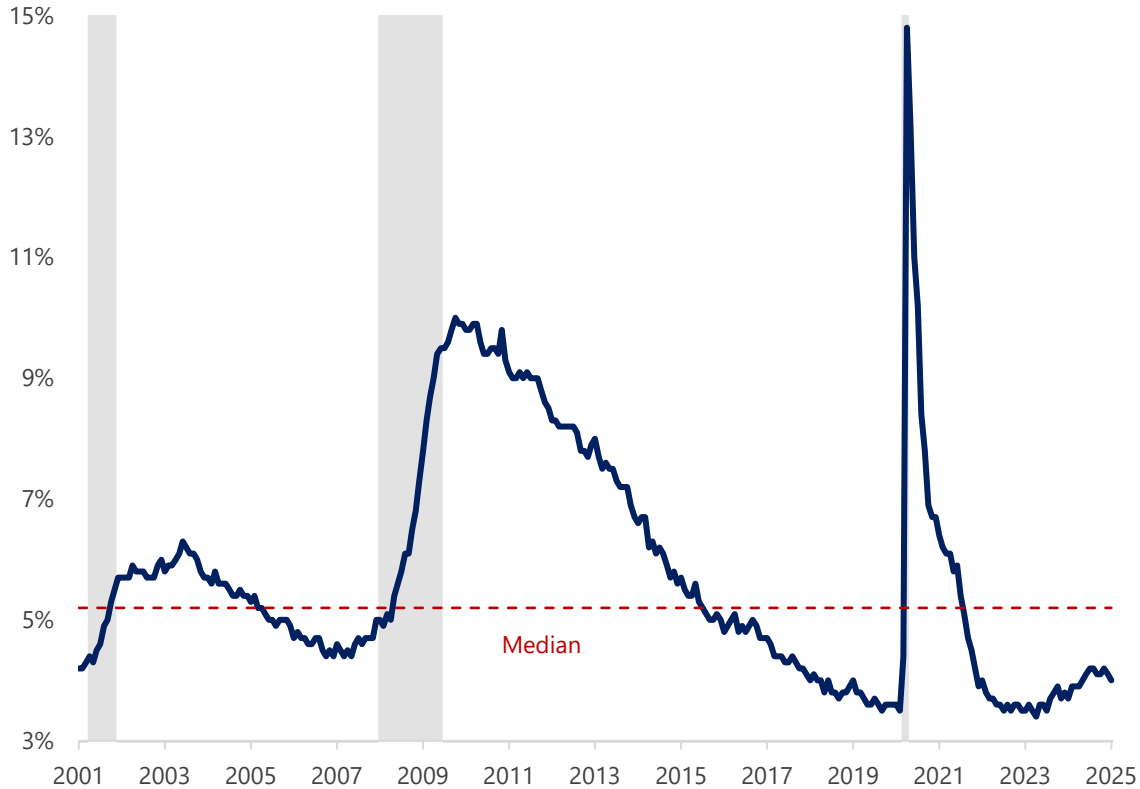


Components of GDP

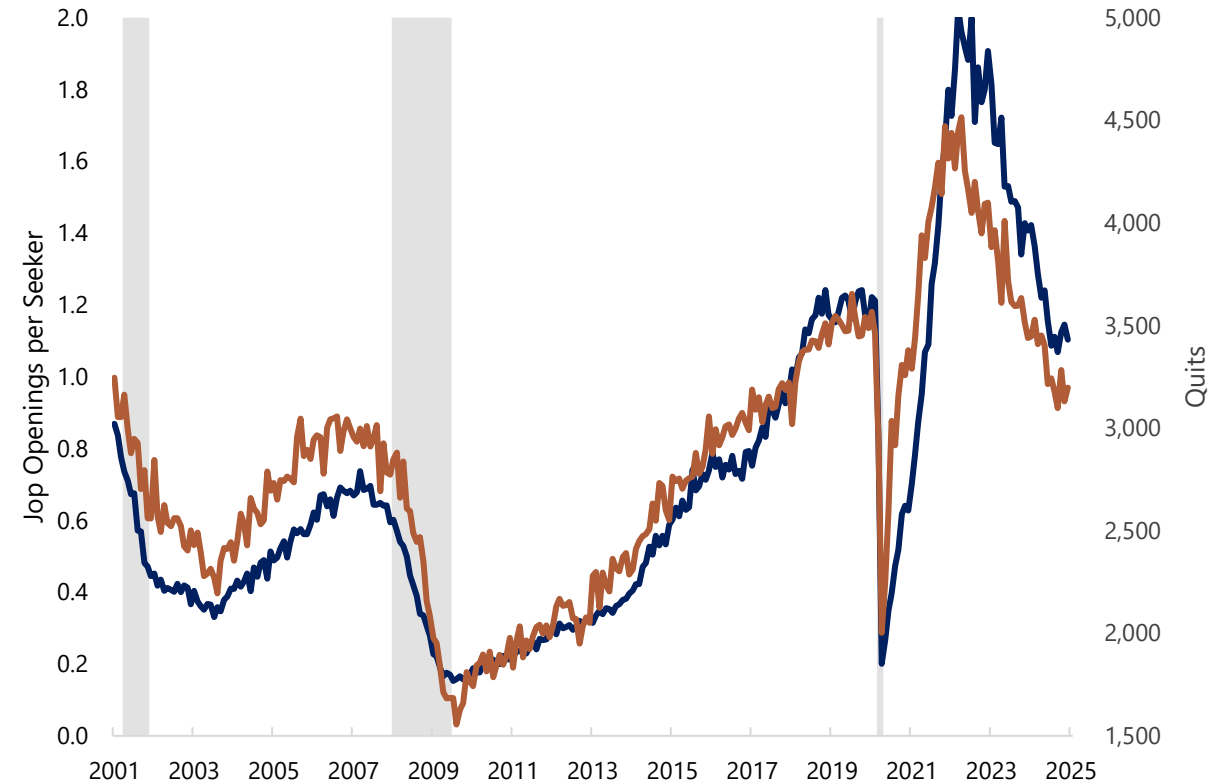


Employment Situation Remains Strong

Unemployment Rate

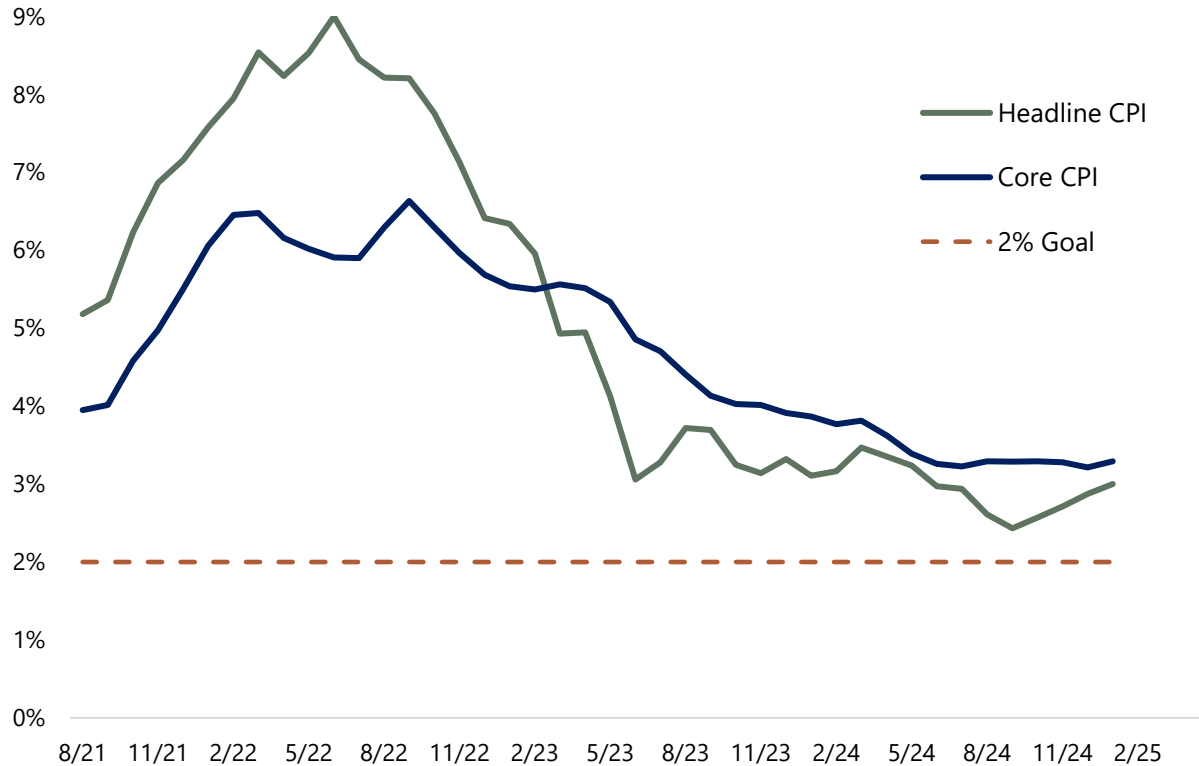


Job Opening per Seeker and Quits

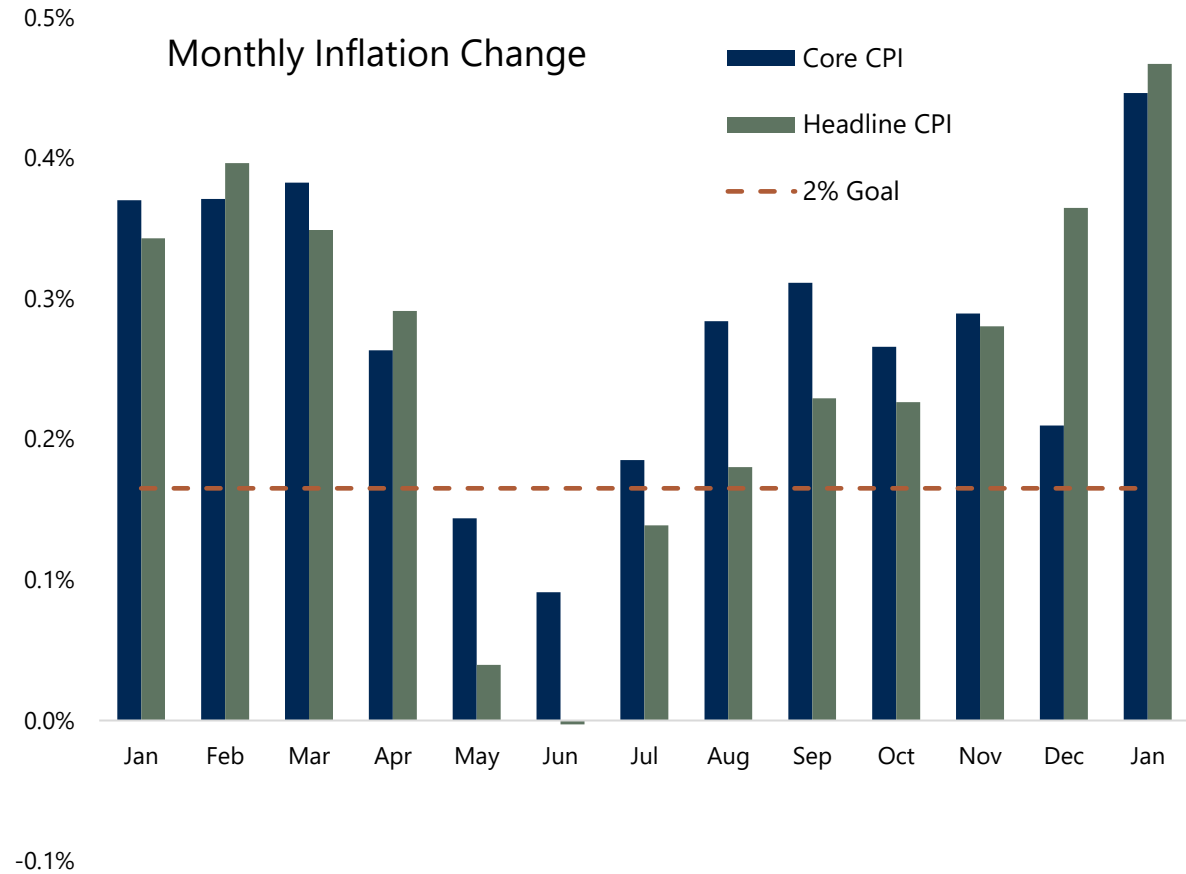


Inflation Coming in a Little Hot, but Stable

Annual Inflation Change



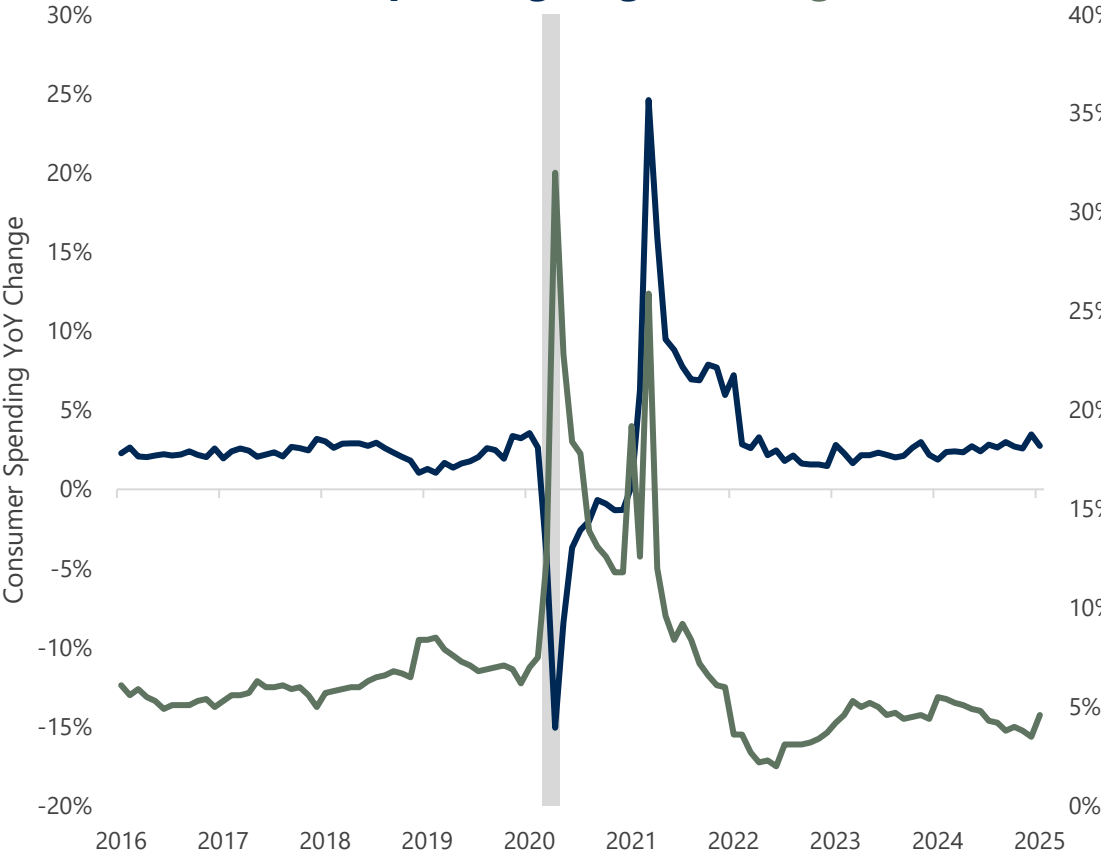
Monthly Inflation Change



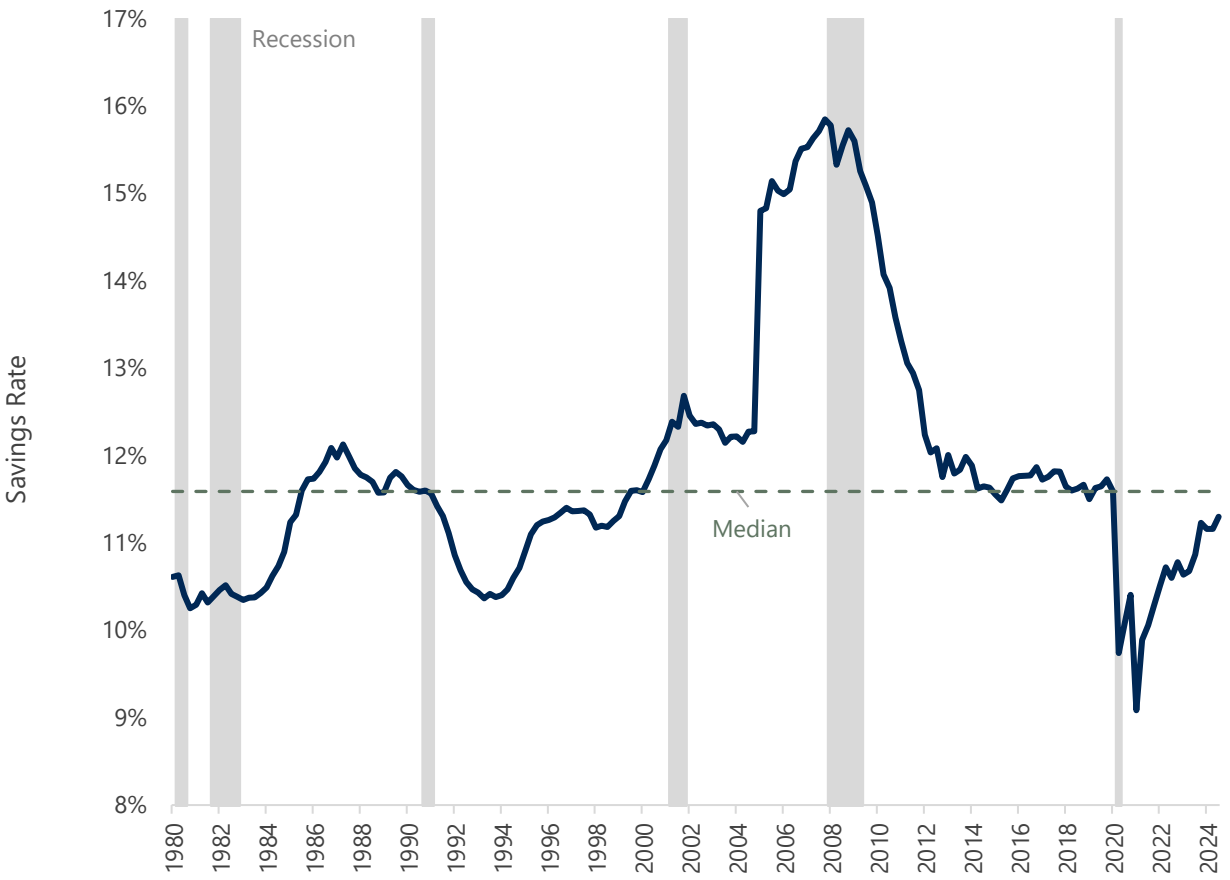
Source: Federal Reserve Economic Database (FRED). Consumer Price Index. Annual CPI Forecasts are made by WJ using past month over month CPI data and extrapolating forward with different growth rates.

Consumer is Strong

Consumer Spending Chg vs Savings Rate



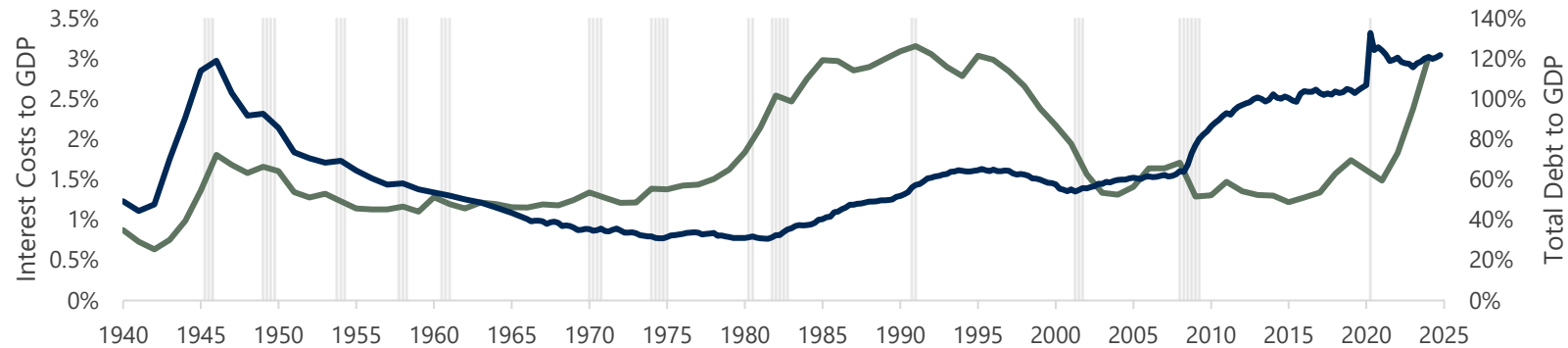
Household Debt Service Payments as % of Income



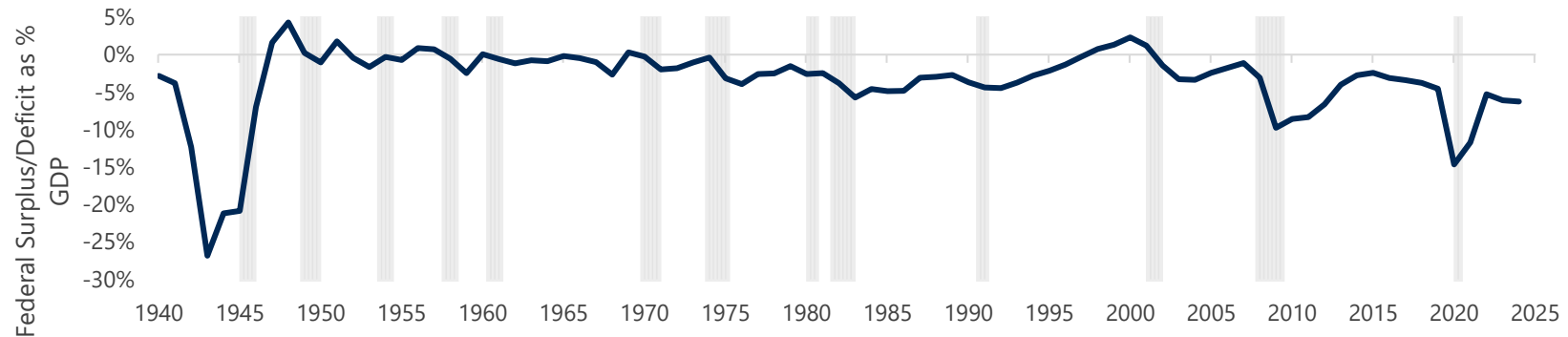
Source: Federal Reserve Economic Database (FRED). Personal Saving Rate plus Real Personal Consumption Expenditures (left) and Household Debt Service Payments as a Percent of Disposable Personal Income (right). Recessions from NBER based Recession Indicators for the United States from the Period following the Peak through the Trough

Interest Costs and the Deficit Rising

Gov't Interest/GDP and Gov't Total Debt/GDP



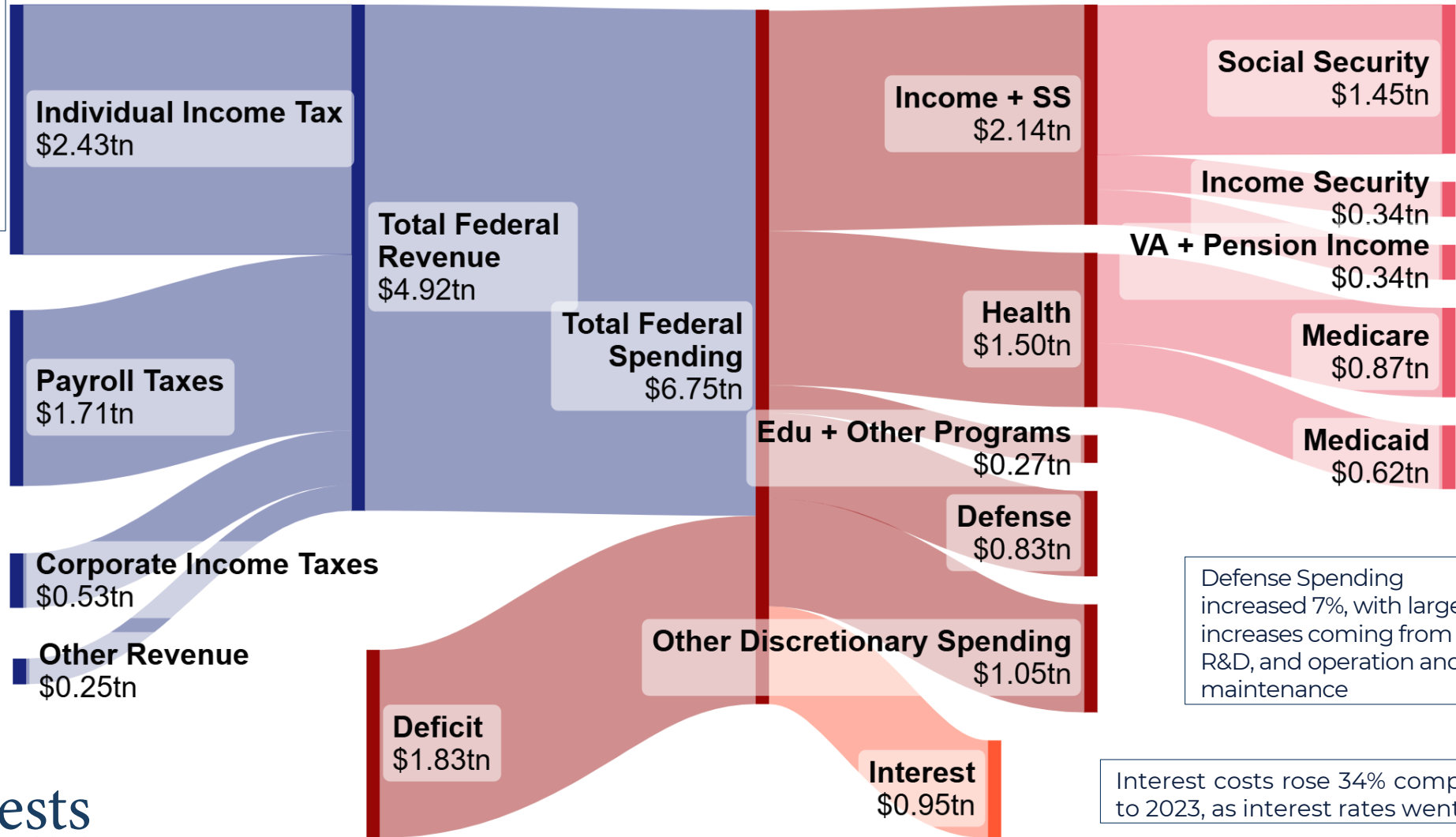
Federal Budget Surplus/Deficit



Government Expenditures 2024

This is an in depth look at how the US makes and spends money. On the spending side, the top 3 categories are known as “mandatory spending” and are unable to change without major reform. That leaves “Defense” and “Other Discretionary Spending” as the two categories congress can change on any year.

Total Receipts were up 11% in fiscal year 2024 compared to 2023. Most of these came from higher income tax receipts, and deferrals from 2023 that were paid in 2024.



Total Outlays were up 10% in fiscal year 2024 compared to 2023

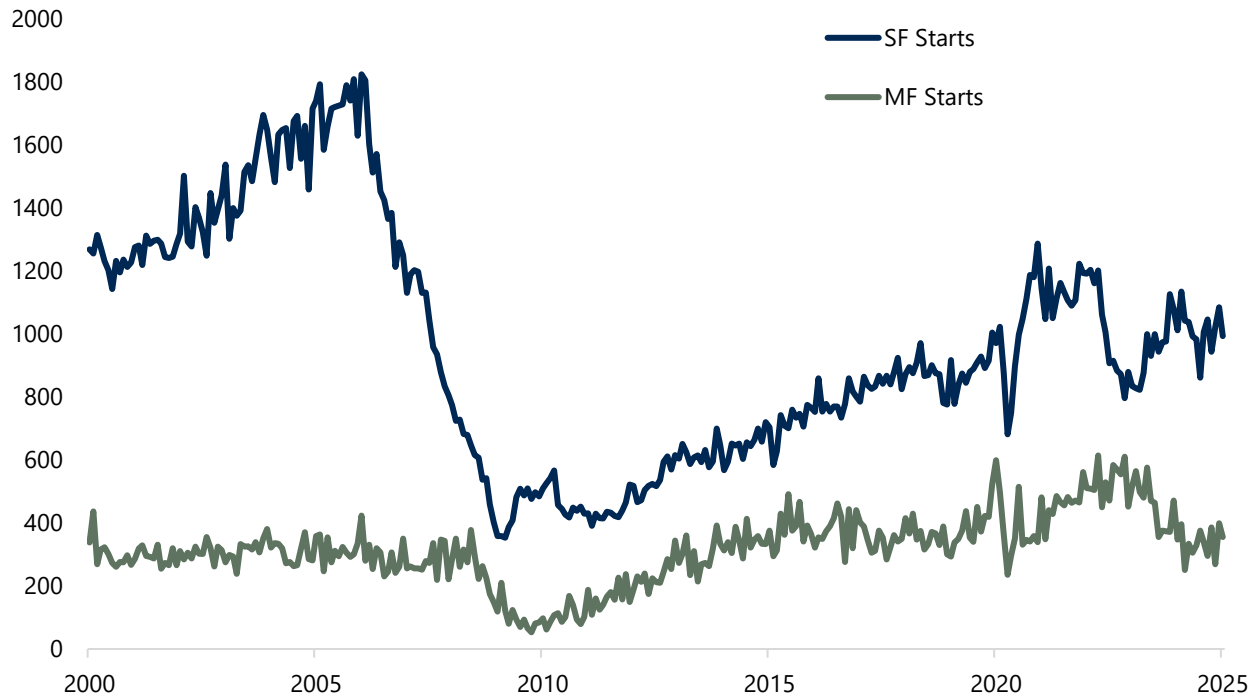
SS and Medicare rose 8% and 9% respectively, due to cost of living adjustments and more beneficiaries.

Defense Spending increased 7%, with largest increases coming from R&D, and operation and maintenance

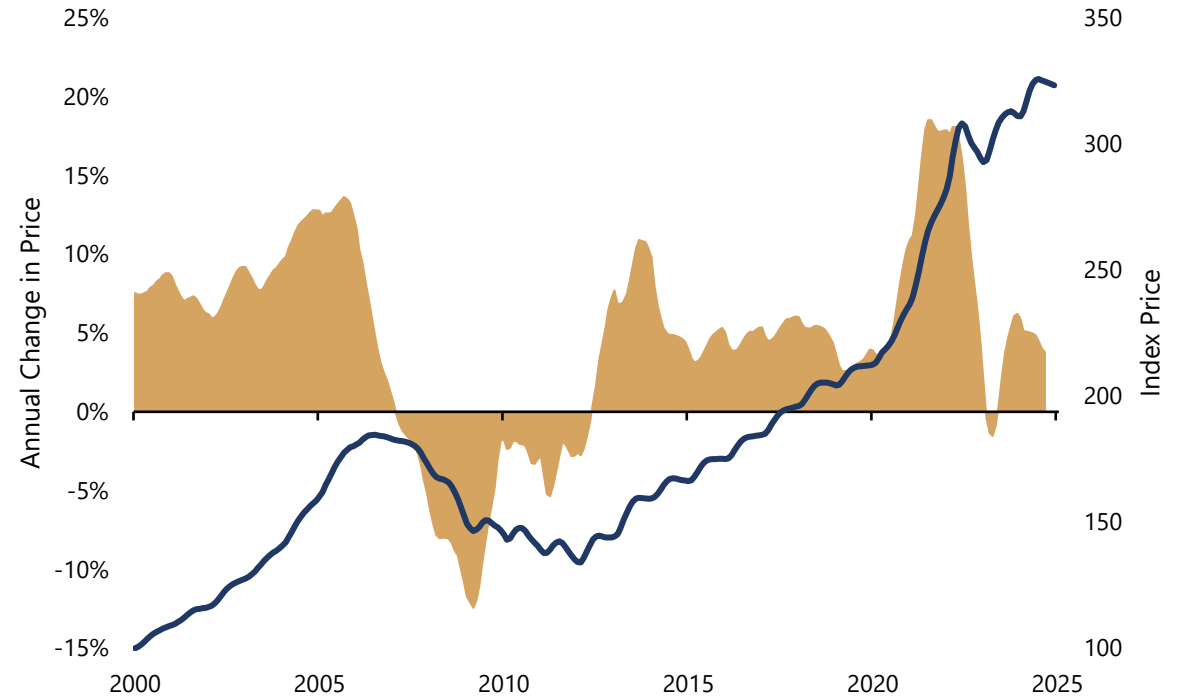
Interest costs rose 34% compared to 2023, as interest rates went up.

Housing Prices High While Starts Low

Housing Starts and Completes



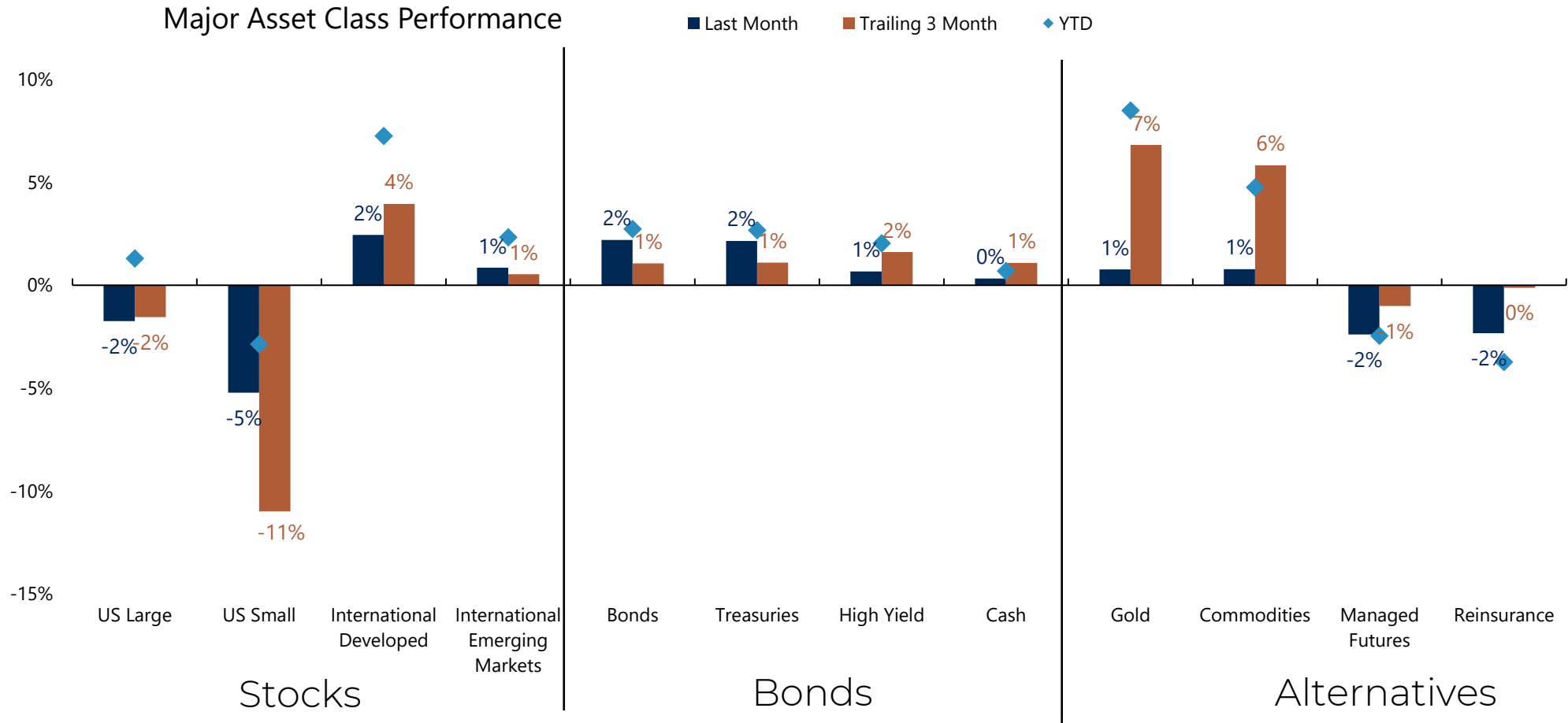
Home Prices



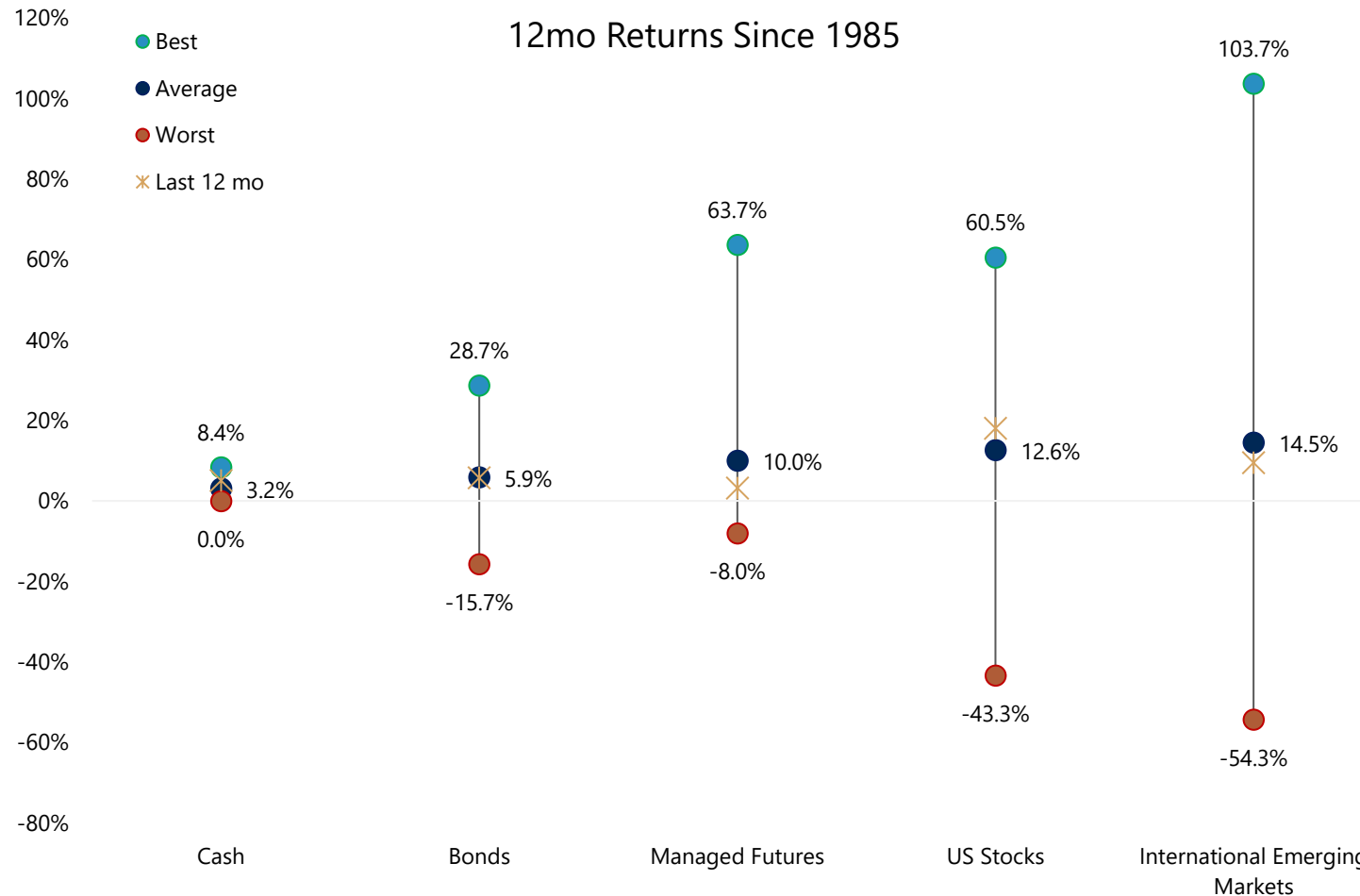
A housing start is the beginning of construction on a new residential housing unit and indicates how much new housing supply is on the horizon. On the right we show home prices over time, as well as the annual rate of change. Prices surged in 2021-2022 but have stopped growing altogether. What they do next will depend on how much pent-up demand there is, and how much housing we build going forward. Note of how significantly starts dropped after the 2008 crisis, and led to the undersupply we have today.

WJ State of the Markets

Foreign Stocks, Bonds, Commodities Off to Good Start



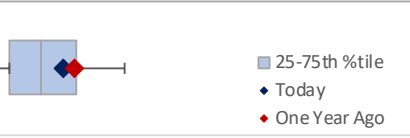

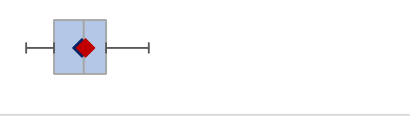
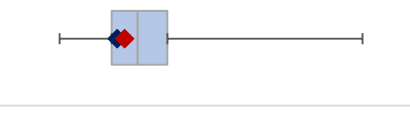
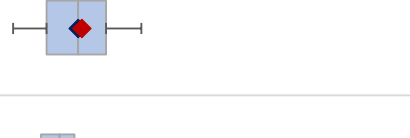

Historical Asset Class Return Range

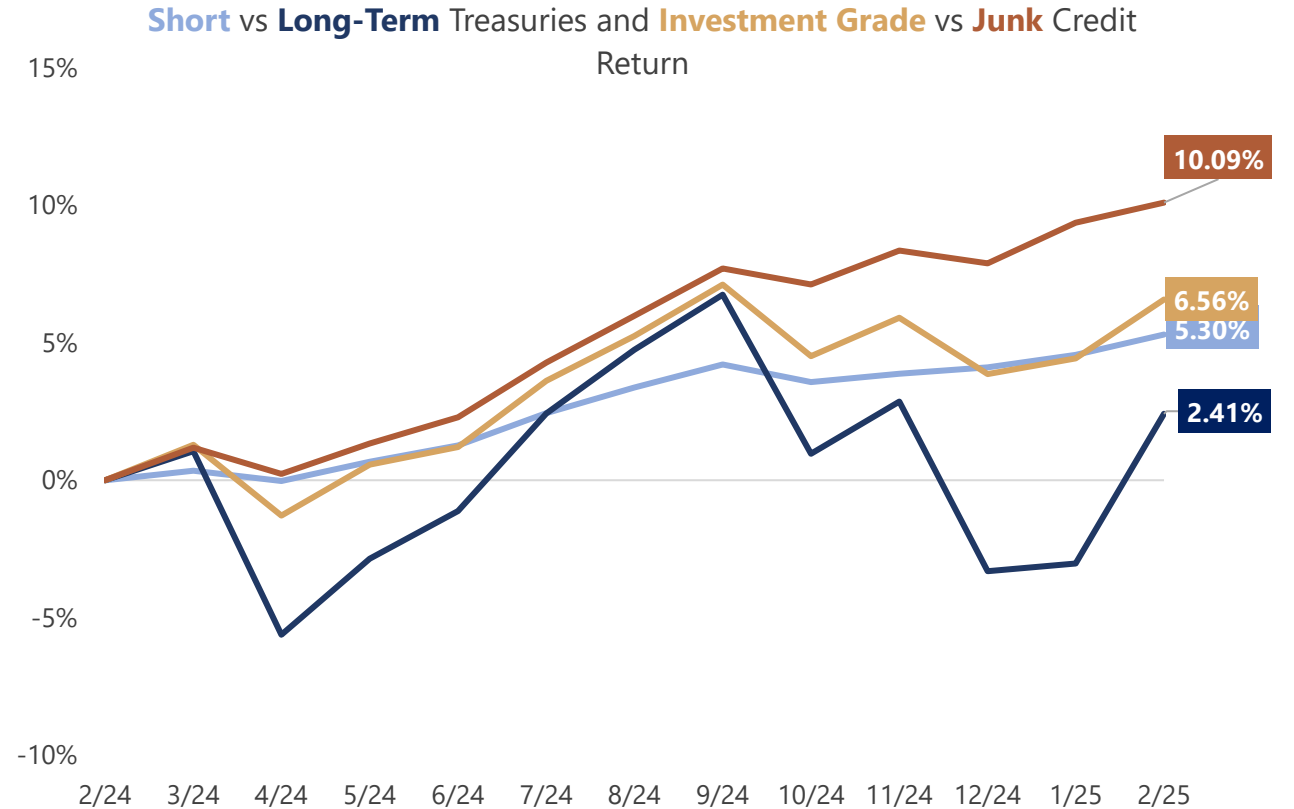


This chart shows the range of 12 month returns historically, by asset class. As you'd expect, the riskier investment leads to a greater potential gain, as well as loss.

The X on the line represents the last 12 months.

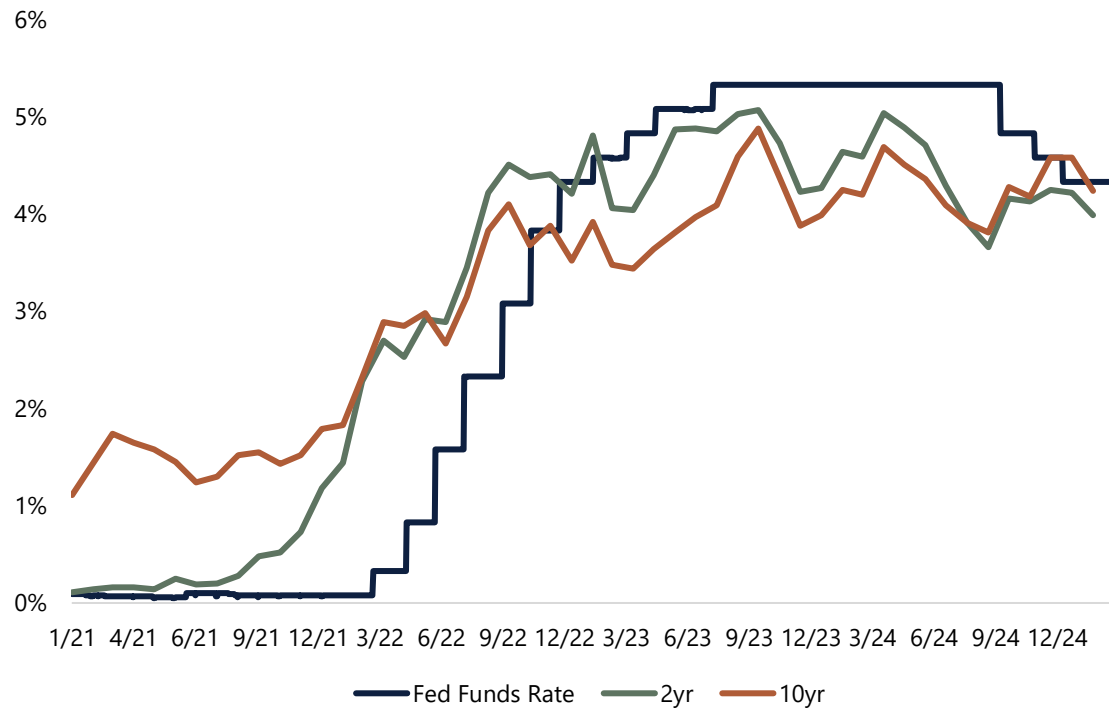
Strong Year For Bonds

Bond Type	Yield (%)			Yield History
	Last Month	Last Year	Change	
ST Treasury	4.01	4.68	-0.67	
LT Treasury	4.56	4.42	0.14	
Investment Grade	5.08	5.3	-0.22	
High-Yield	7.15	7.66	-0.51	
Mortgage-Backed	4.85	5.04	-0.19	
Municipal Bonds	3.55	3.49	0.06	

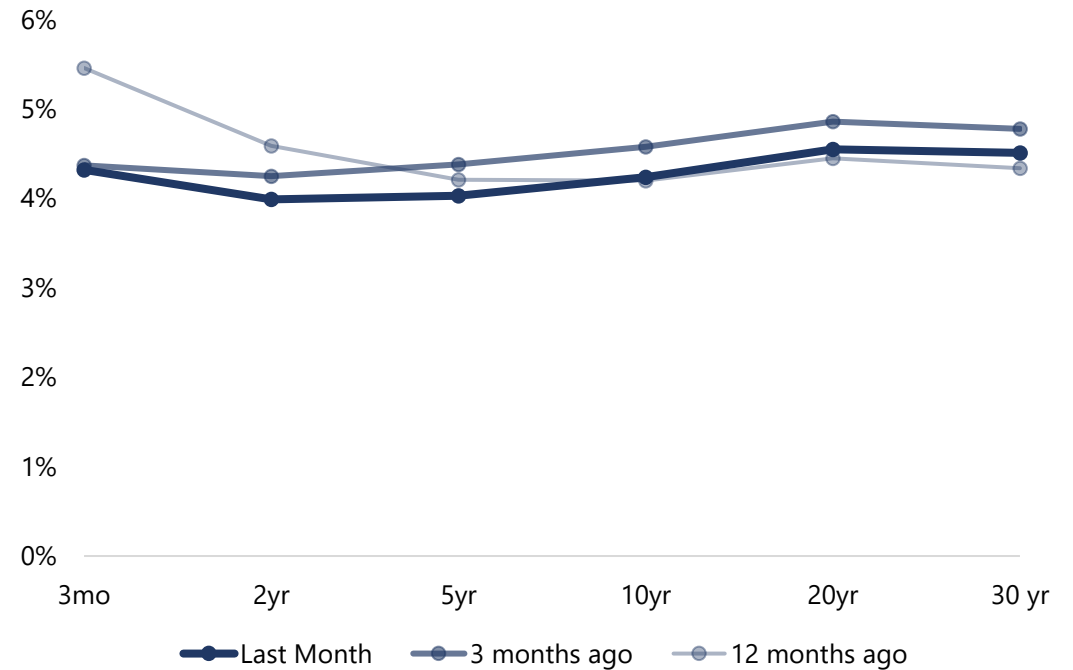


Fed is Paused, Longer Rates Coming Down

Key Treasury Yields



Treasury Yield Curve

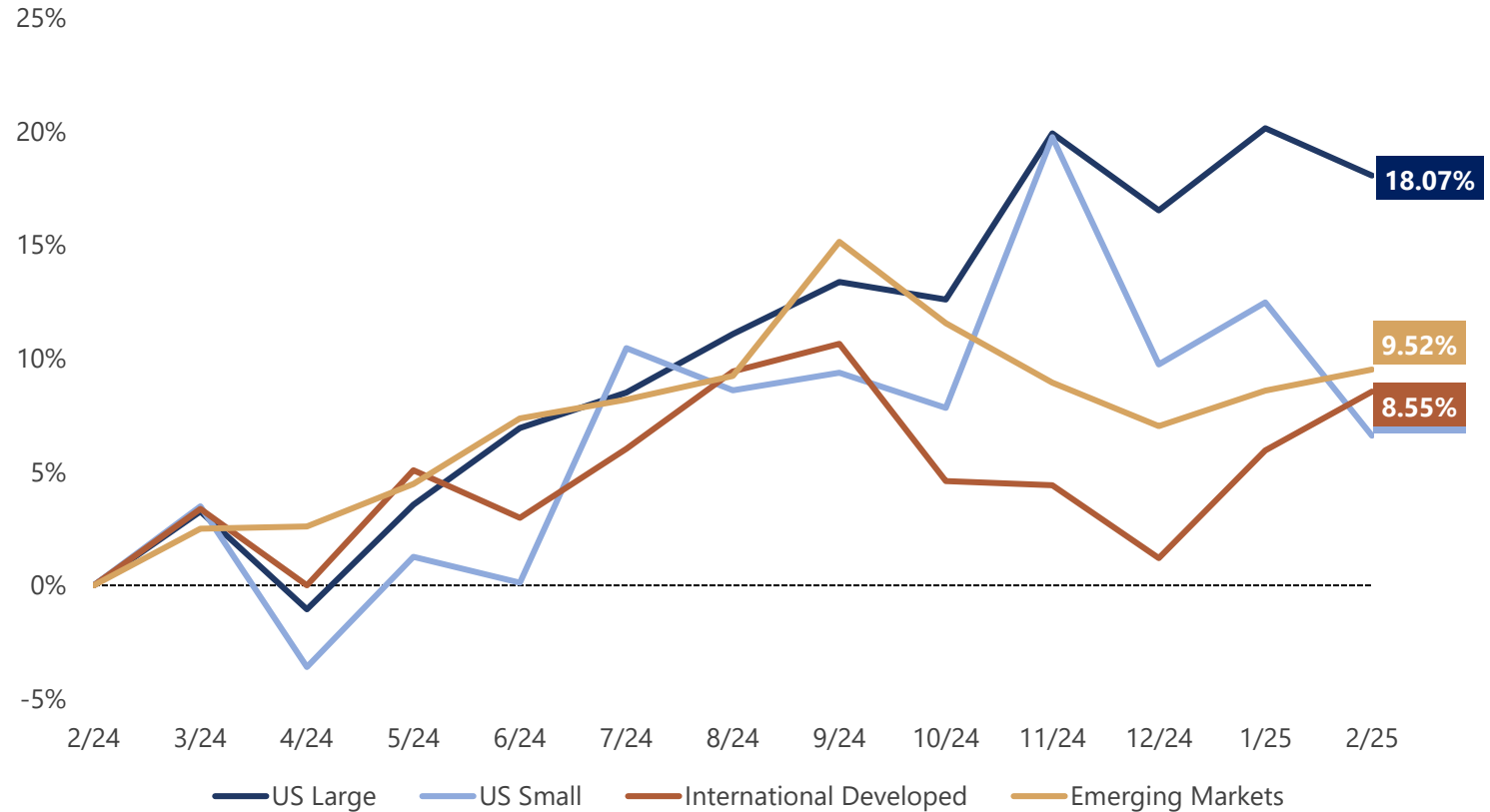


	3mo	2yr	5yr	10yr	20yr	30 yr
Last Month	4.3%	4.0%	4.0%	4.2%	4.6%	4.5%
3 months ago	4.4%	4.3%	4.4%	4.6%	4.9%	4.8%
12 months ago	5.5%	4.6%	4.2%	4.2%	4.5%	4.3%

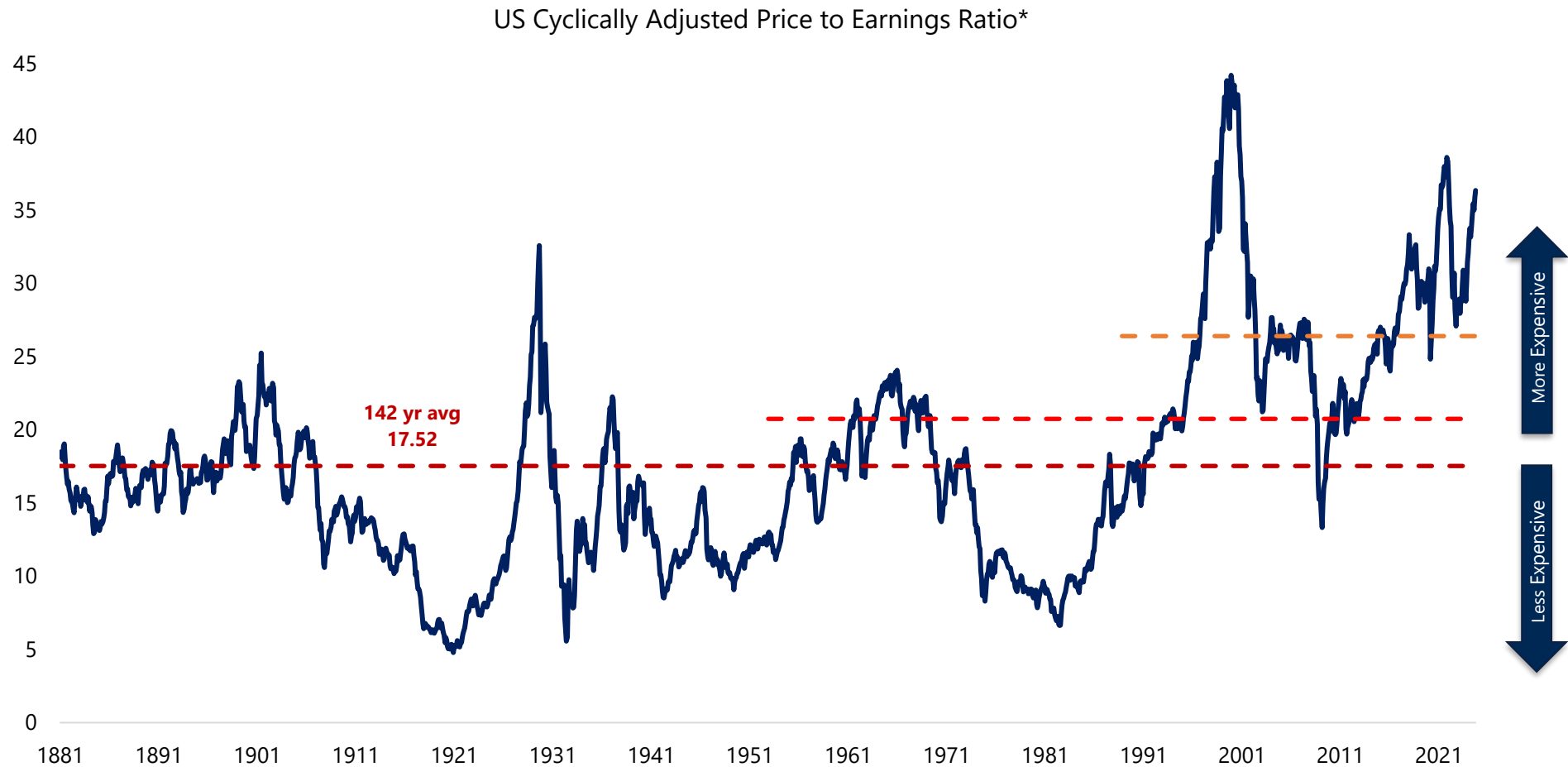
Foreign Stocks Starting to Catch Up

	Stock Type	Last Month	Last 3 Months	Last 12 Months
Core	US Large	-1.7%	-1.5%	18.1%
	US Small	-5.2%	-11.0%	6.6%
	International Developed	2.4%	4.0%	8.5%
	International Emerging	0.8%	0.5%	9.5%
Other	US Value	0.4%	-2.2%	15.5%
	US Growth	-3.6%	-0.9%	19.5%
	Nasdaq	-2.7%	-0.1%	16.4%

US vs International Stock Performance



US Stocks Valuation High Historically

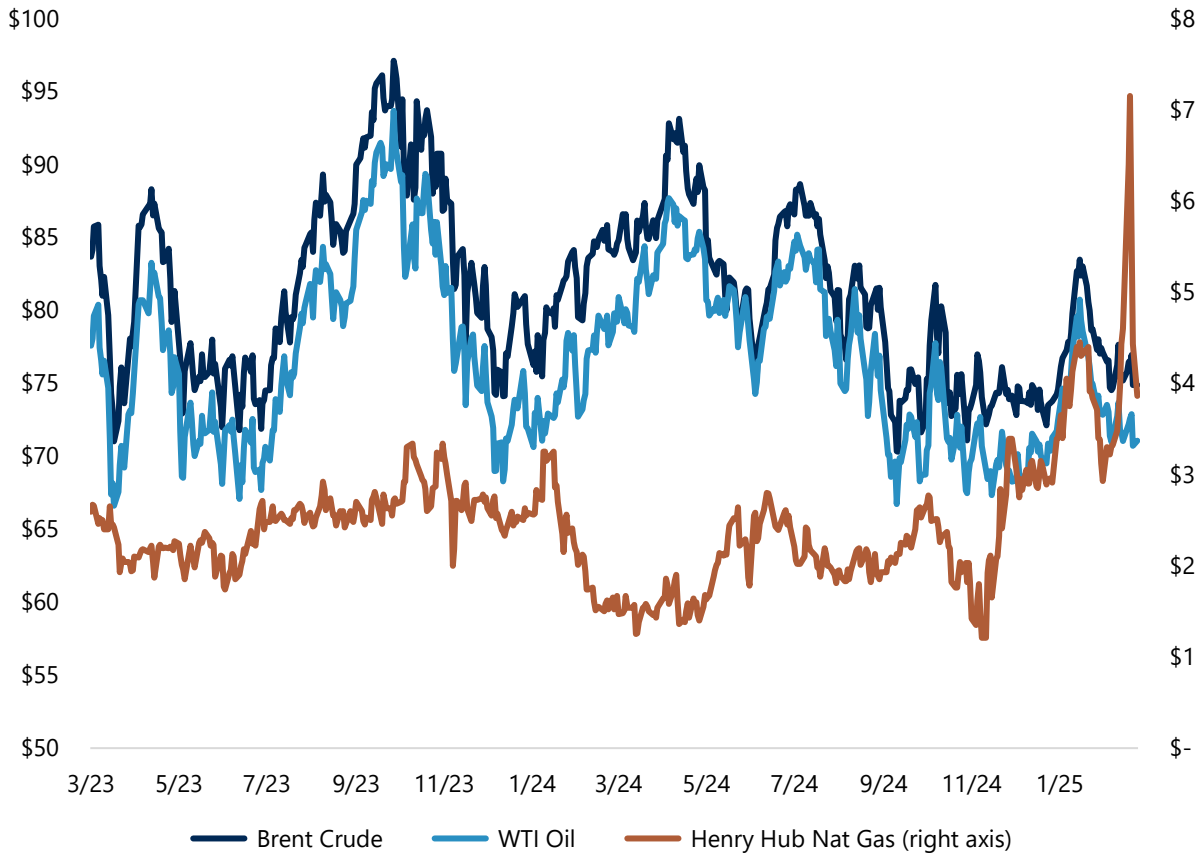


Oil Falling, But Nat Gas Rising

Bloomberg Commodity Index



Energy Prices



Periodic Table of Asset Class Returns



											Through Last Month End 2/28/2025	
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 YTD	5 Yr	10 Yr
Reinsurance 8%	US Small Stock 22%	Intl Emerging Stk 37%	Cash 2%	US Large Stock 31%	US Large Stock 21%	US Large Stock 26%	Trend Following 22%	Reinsurance 44%	Reinsurance 31%	Intl Developed Stk 7%	US Large Stock 16%	US Large Stock 13%
Bonds 2%	US Large Stock 12%	Intl Developed Stk 27%	Bonds 0%	US Small Stock 25%	US Small Stock 20%	US Small Stock 15%	Reinsurance 3%	US Large Stock 26%	US Large Stock 24%	Bonds 3%	Reinsurance 14%	US Small Stock 7%
US Large Stock 1%	Intl Emerging Stk 10%	US Large Stock 22%	US Large Stock -5%	Intl Developed Stk 23%	Intl Emerging Stk 18%	Intl Developed Stk 12%	Cash 2%	Intl Developed Stk 18%	TAA 12%	Moderate Blended Port 3%	US Small Stock 9%	Moderate Blended Port 6%
Cash 0%	Reinsurance 6%	TAA 19%	Reinsurance -6%	TAA 20%	Moderate Blended Port 13%	Moderate Blended Port 11%	Bonds -12%	US Small Stock 17%	US Small Stock 11%	Intl Emerging Stk 2%	Moderate Blended Port 8%	Reinsurance 6%
Intl Developed Stk 0%	Moderate Blended Port 6%	Moderate Blended Port 17%	Moderate Blended Port -7%	Moderate Blended Port 20%	Intl Developed Stk 8%	TAA 10%	TAA -12%	Moderate Blended Port 17%	Moderate Blended Port 10%	TAA 2%	Intl Developed Stk 8%	Intl Developed Stk 6%
Trend Following 0%	TAA 5%	US Small Stock 15%	TAA -8%	Intl Emerging Stk 18%	Reinsurance 7%	Trend Following 5%	Moderate Blended Port -15%	Intl Emerging Stk 12%	Intl Emerging Stk 7%	US Large Stock 1%	Trend Following 5%	TAA 5%
Moderate Blended Port 0%	Intl Developed Stk 2%	Bonds 5%	US Small Stock -11%	Bonds 8%	Bonds 7%	Cash 0%	Intl Developed Stk -15%	TAA 12%	Cash 5%	Cash 1%	TAA 6%	Intl Emerging Stk 4%
TAA -4%	Bonds 1%	Trend Following 2%	Trend Following -13%	Trend Following 4%	Trend Following 3%	Bonds -1%	US Large Stock -19%	Bonds 6%	Intl Developed Stk 3%	Trend Following -3%	Intl Emerging Stk 5%	Cash 2%
US Small Stock -4%	Cash 0%	Cash 1%	Intl Developed Stk -14%	Cash 2%	Cash 0%	Intl Emerging Stk -1%	Intl Emerging Stk -20%	Cash 5%	Trend Following 3%	US Small Stock -3%	Cash 3%	Bonds 2%
Intl Emerging Stk -14%	Trend Following -6%	Reinsurance -11%	Intl Emerging Stk -15%	Reinsurance -4%	TAA -2%	Reinsurance -5%	US Small Stock -20%	Trend Following -3%	Bonds 1%	Reinsurance -4%	Bonds 0%	Trend Following 0%

Disclaimer

PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT A GUARANTEE OF CURRENT OR FUTURE RESULTS. Examples of historical information included in this presentation do not, nor are they intended to, constitute a promise of similar future results. Specific client portfolio allocations, risks and returns can and may deviate from these examples depending on accounts and types of investments available through each account. Future market views by WJ Interests, LLC may vary significantly from the historical examples presented herein and no one receiving this summary should assume that WJ Interests, LLC will be able to replicate successful views in the future.

Moderate Blended Portfolio is for illustrative purposes only. It is calculated by taking a weighted average of the following asset classes and represents a moderate risk portfolio incorporating leverage and the asset classes in the table:

27%	US Large Stock	iShares Russell 1000 (IWB)
6%	US Small Stock	iShares Russell 2000 (IWM)
21%	Intl Developed Stock	iShares Core MSCI EAFE (IEFA)
6%	Intl Emerging Stock	iShares Core MSCI Emerging Markets (IEMG)
40%	Bonds	Vanguard Total Bond Market (BND)
-15%	Cash	Morningstar USD 1M Cash TR USD
5%	Reinsurance	Stone Ridge Reinsurance Fund (SRRIX)
5%	Managed Futures	SG Trend Index, PIMCO Trends (PQTIX), Virtus Alphasimplex (ASFYX), Standpoint (BLNDX)
5%	TAA	GMO Benchmark Free (GBMIX) and Strategy Shares Nwfn/Rslv Rbt ETF (ROMO)

Assumes annual rebalancing. All data represents total return for stated period.