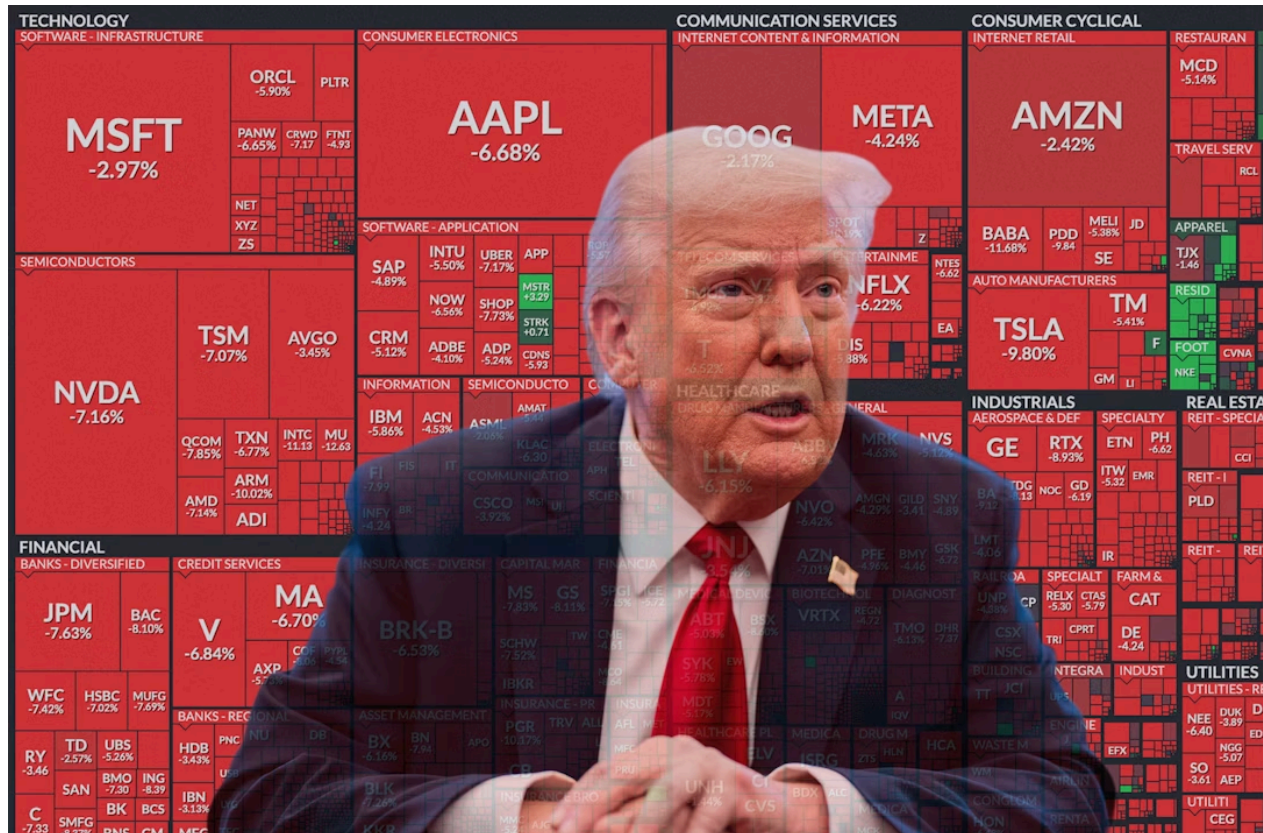


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Six Tips for Talking About Trump's Failing Economy



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Americans voted for Trump on the promise of a stronger economy and lower inflation. Throughout his first two months they have grown increasingly skeptical that Trump would deliver on this promise. They are seeing blaring red headlines of trade wars, plummeting stock prices, and a looming recession—all brought about by Donald Trump's massive wave of new tariffs. The Trump Slump is here and is likely to get much worse. **Democrats' economic message must have singular purpose: make Republicans own Trump's economic horror show.**

As you're talking about Trump's failing economic policies, here are six rules we'd recommend to ensure voters know who alone is to blame:

DON'T: Talk about a generic recession as if it had simply occurred as an act of bad economic luck or was the prior Administration's fault.

DO: Label this economy the “Trump Slump” or the “Trump Recession,” as we are in this economic crisis only because of Trump and his Rubber Stamp GOP Congress.

DON’T: Use the word tariff by itself. Trump voters in focus groups see tariffs as a signature policy of his AND a consumer tax—and they are right.

DO: Brand it the “Trump Tariffs” or the “Trump Tariff Tax,” which is stoking inflation and raising prices on everyday items for middle-class families. Hammer the point that the Trump Tariffs are the largest tax increase in US history.

DON’T: Make voters take Democrats’ word for how severe the economic suffering will get.

DO: Remind them over and over that Trump said he “couldn’t care less” if companies jack up prices or if people experienced pain.

DON’T: Focus on the macro implications of the Trump Tariffs. If you are saying “our trade partners,” you better be on a business news station.

DO: Personalize the pain using local examples of price increases or of businesses struggling because of Trump’s tariffs—and pound those relentlessly.

DON’T: Let Republicans off the hook, as if the Trump Tariffs are something they are powerless to stop.

DO: Stress to voters that Congress has the power to repeal Trump’s Tariff Tax TODAY. But Republicans care more about the political pain they might suffer if they deny Trump his tariffs than they do about the economic pain this massive tax increase is causing the working and middle class.

DON’T: Forget to connect the dots for voters.

DO: Emphasize that everything Trump is doing is killing the economy. Trump and the “Musk Mess” at DOGE are creating economic chaos and driving up costs—taking away the veterans and Social Security benefits that people earned, making it exceedingly difficult to get a small business loan, and proposing to add \$4+ trillion to the national debt. They want to give tax breaks to billionaires while raising costs on everything you buy.

Trump’s handling of the economy was already a vulnerability with voters before Wednesday’s tariff announcement. In just two months, his approval has plummeted by double digits with Independent and moderate voters and fallen with Trump 2024 voters and white, non-college voters. **This is a vital moment for Democrats to lean in with consistent and strategic messaging so voters know that Trump and Republicans are to blame for skyrocketing costs and crashing the US economy.**

The Trump Slump: March 2025 polling average has Trump handling of the economy, inflation, and tariffs at record lows

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling the following issues?

Issue	Approve	Disapprove	Net approval
The economy	43%	53%	-10%
Inflation	41%	54%	-13%
Tariffs	40%	56%	-16%

**Trump handling of tariffs was only asked in the CNN/SSRS & Echelon Insights surveys*
Table: Third Way • Source: Average of 13 public polls surveyed in March 2025 (Fox News, Economist/YouGov, CNN/SSRS, Quinnipiac, CBS/YouGov, AP-NORC, Gallup, Reuters/Ipsos, Emerson College, Navigator/GSG, Cygnal, Echelon Insights) • Created with Datawrapper

The Trump Slump: Trump's net approval on the economy has plummeted with core groups of voters

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling the economy?

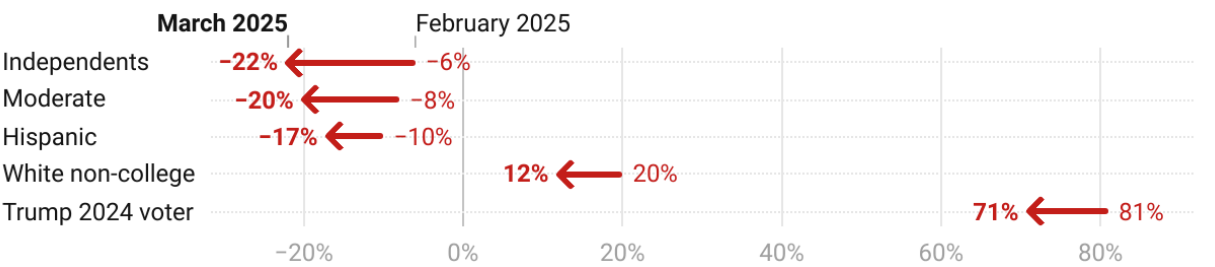


Chart: Third Way • Source: March 2025: Average of 13 public polls; February 2025: Average of 10 public polls - (Fox News, Economist/YouGov, CNN/SSRS, Quinnipiac, CBS/YouGov, AP-NORC, Gallup, WaPo/Ipsos, Reuters/Ipsos, Emerson College, Navigator/GSG, Cygnal, Echelon Insights) • Created with Datawrapper