

Under Trump, Declining Travel and Tourism is Hitting Local Economies Throughout the United States

The Joint Economic Committee – Minority analyzed data from the federal government, states, and industry to see how Trump’s tariffs and other actions have impacted the U.S. travel and tourism economy. The Committee found that during the Trump administration, American businesses in nearly every part of the country have seen fewer domestic and international tourists, harming state and local communities that depend on tourism revenue.

New Committee calculations in this report show that:

- International tourism to the U.S. dropped in 2025, which resulted in decreased visitor spending at American businesses compared to 2024.
 - Last year, 9.9 million fewer Canadians visited the U.S. compared to 2024, which in particular harms businesses that benefit from Canadian tourists.
 - America’s travel sector posted a nearly \$14 billion trade deficit in 2025, the first deficit in that sector since data collection began in 1999.
- The number of jobs in the hotel and lodging sector declined last year for the first time since the Great Recession, aside from 2020.
 - States in every region of the country experienced job losses in hotels and lodging.
 - U.S. hotels had lower occupancy and earned less revenue per available room in 2025 than in 2024.
 - Under Trump, the smallest businesses in the leisure and hospitality sector have lost 63,900 jobs.
- The share of Americans who plan to take a domestic vacation in the next six months is lower now than when President Trump took office.
- Domestic airline passenger boardings declined by more than 10.7 million in 2025 compared to 2024. Since 2009, only 2020 saw a decline in domestic passenger boardings.
- Visitors to sites in the National Park System dropped by 15 million last year compared to 2024, costing nearby communities an estimated \$1.3 billion in revenue.

In addition to Trump’s tariffs, other actions from the Trump administration that have contributed to the tourism downturn include [cuts](#) to funding for Brand USA, the public-private partnership program specifically to draw in international visitors; cuts to federal workforce positions that support travelers, including [thousands](#) of staff in the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service; and the failure thus far to appoint a Congressionally mandated Assistant Secretary of Travel and Tourism at the U.S. Commerce Department. All of this comes while the U.S. prepares to host major events, such as the 2026 FIFA World Cup and America 250, which should be strong opportunities to showcase America and drive travel and tourism revenue for local economies.

Tourism drives jobs and economic growth in every region of the country

America's tourism industry [supports](#) 10 million American jobs and contributes more than \$2 trillion to the U.S. economy each year. Tourism particularly strengthens local economies and supports small businesses. Nearly four in five U.S. businesses in the hotel and lodging industry employ [fewer](#) than 20 employees. Because tourism relies heavily on local workers, spending in travel-heavy industries like accommodations and food service supports more than twice as many American jobs per dollar compared with the overall private sector. Based on data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis analyzed by the Joint Economic Committee – Minority, every \$1 million spent at hotels and restaurants supports about 12.5 jobs, compared with the 5.2 jobs supported in the overall private sector.

In addition, every 100 jobs in tourism supports 55 jobs in [other](#) connected industries. For example, bedding suppliers depend on demand from hotels. As a result, any decline in the tourism sector has negative ripple effects throughout the economy, affecting many more workers outside of those directly employed by hotels, restaurants, and airlines.

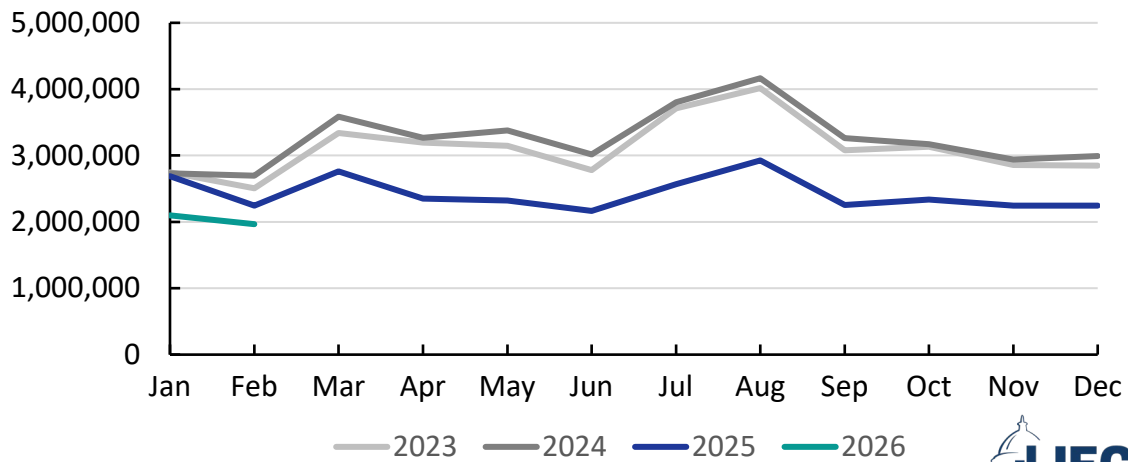
In the wake of President Trump's tariffs and detrimental policies, international visits and tourism to the U.S. dropped last year

American businesses have seen fewer international visitors since Trump took office, with large declines in the number of visitors from Canada and from overseas. **In total, U.S. government data show that there were far fewer overnight international visitors to the United States in 2025 compared to 2024.** That is especially damaging because these visitors tend to spend more on lodging and meals.

Looking just at Canada, a Committee analysis of U.S. Customs and Border Protection data shows that there were **4.2 million fewer Canadian visitors on overnight trips** between 2024 and 2025. Data from the Canadian government show that on top of this decline, there were also 5.7 million fewer [day trips](#) by Canadians to the U.S. in 2025 compared to 2024, leading to an **overall drop of 9.9 million Canadian visitors to the U.S.** Instead of travelling to the U.S., data show that Canadians have taken their travel spending elsewhere. Last year, Canadians took a [record-high](#) 14 million trips to destinations other than the U.S., a 9 percent increase compared to 2024. In the first three quarters of 2025, the amount spent by Canadians on trips to other destinations saw a 14 percent increase compared to the same period in 2024. In contrast, spending on trips to the U.S. fell by 15 percent.

Canadian Tourism Fell Below Prior Years Every Month in 2025

Canadian residents traveling to the U.S. each month



Source: Statistics Canada



Looking at tourism from outside of North America, Committee analysis of U.S. Customs and Border Protection data shows that **fewer overseas visitors came to the U.S. on tourist visas in 2025 than in 2024, the first drop in tourists from overseas since 2020.** The U.S. saw fewer tourists from key overseas markets shown below. On average, overseas visitors [spend](#) \$4,000 in the United States per visit.

The Number of Tourists from Key Overseas Markets Fell in 2025			
Overseas Country	Change in Tourists from 2024	Average Spent per Visit to the U.S.	Total Lost Spending
Germany	-12.7%	\$4,152	\$882 Million
France	-7.7%	\$3,754	\$432 Million
South Korea	-2.7%	\$5,228	\$204 Million
Australia	-7.4%	\$6,819	\$459 Million
Netherlands	-8.1%	\$4,113	\$170 Million
Philippines	-14.4%	\$5,461	\$253 Million
New Zealand	-11.7%	\$5,288	\$143 Million

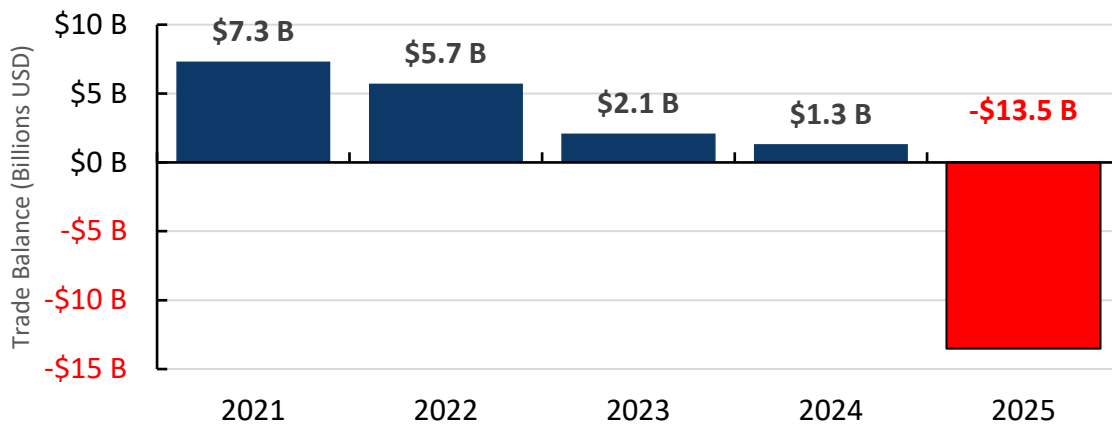
Source: [United States Customs and Border Protection, National Travel and Tourism Office](#)

When President Trump took office in January 2025, total international visitor spending at U.S. businesses had been growing steadily and was up nine percent from the same month a year

earlier. However, visitor spending declined over the course of 2025 and ended the year [down](#) three percent, based on data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Travel and tourism services purchased by international visitors are one of the United States' largest services exports. However, because of declining tourism, **the U.S. experienced a travel trade deficit last year, the first ever recorded since the National Travel and Tourism Office began reporting the data in 1999** – meaning that U.S. businesses received fewer tourism dollars from overseas than U.S. travelers spent abroad for the first time this century.

Last Year, the U.S. Experienced a Trade Deficit in the Travel Industry for the First Time in Decades



Source: The International Trade Administration



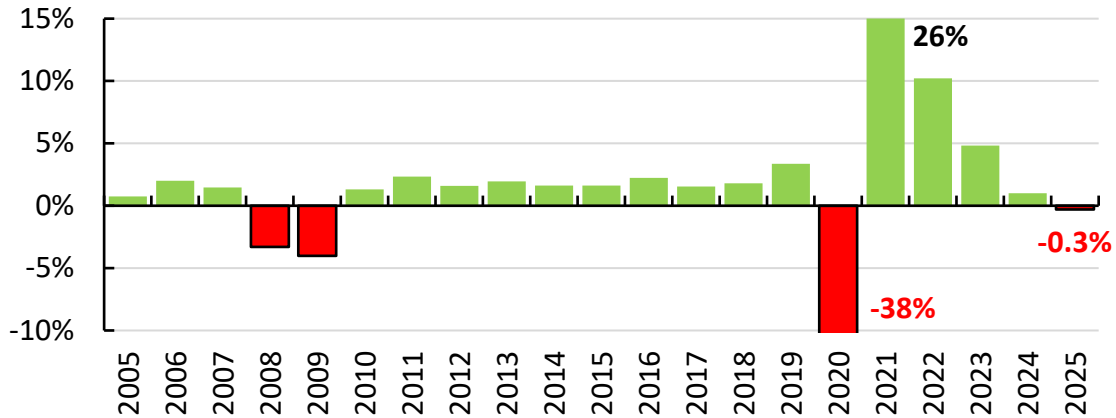
According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, an industry group, the United States was the [only](#) major destination to experience a decline in international visitors in 2025.

Tourism-exposed industries lost jobs in 2025

The hotel and lodging industry faced job losses last year, based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Committee found that since the Great Recession, only one other year – 2020, during the start of the pandemic – saw hotel and lodging employment fall.

Jobs at Hotels and Other Lodging Providers Fell Last Year, A Trend Rarely Seen Outside of Recessions

Annual Change in Employment in Accommodations



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



In addition, states across the country saw significant employment declines in the accommodations sector in 2025, with states in all regions of the country seeing notable job losses in this sector.

The Ten States with the Largest Job Losses in Hotel and Lodging in 2025			
Job Losses in Accommodations in 2025			
1. Colorado	-7.8%	6. New Jersey	-3.4%
2. Tennessee	-7.3%	7. Georgia	-2.9%
3. Vermont	-5.6%	8. Idaho	-2.7%
3. North Dakota	-5.6%	9. Pennsylvania	-2.5%
5. Maryland	-3.7%	10. Florida	-2.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Last year's job losses coincided with declines in key hotel business metrics. According to CoStar, which tracks hotel performance data, **U.S. hotels had lower occupancy and earned less revenue per available room in 2025 than in 2024, the first annual declines in those metrics since 2020.**

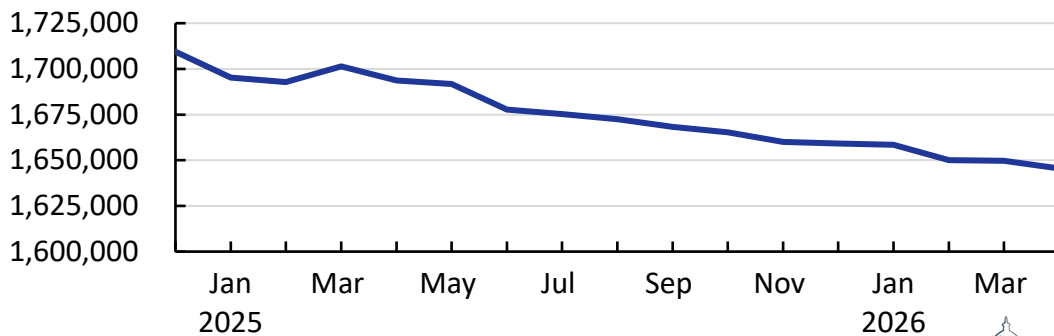
Declines in the hotel and lodging industry are part of a broader trend affecting other industries that often depend on tourism revenue. Based on a Committee analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data:

- Annual job growth in recreation and gambling, which includes amusement parks, arcades, and casinos, slowed from 3.7 percent in 2024 to only 0.7 percent in 2025. Excluding 2020, last year saw the weakest job growth in the sector in 15 years.
- Annual job growth at museums and historical sites slowed from 2.6 percent in 2024 to only 1.3 percent in 2025. Excluding 2020, last year saw the weakest job growth in the sector in 15 years.

Small businesses have also been particularly hard hit. America’s tourism sector is [dominated](#) by small businesses, which tend to have limited cash reserves and little ability to weather a prolonged downturn. This means that even a modest drop in revenue can quickly lead to layoffs. **Employment at the smallest businesses (those with fewer than 10 employees) in leisure and hospitality dropped by nearly 4 percent, or 63,900 jobs, from December 2024 to April 2026,** based on a Committee analysis of the most recent [data](#) from Intuit Quickbooks.

The Smallest Businesses in Leisure and Hospitality Have Lost 63,900 Jobs Since December 2024

Employment at Leisure and Hospitality Businesses with 1 – 9 Employees



Source: Intuit Quickbooks Small Business Index



Local Snapshots



New Hampshire

Tourism is New Hampshire’s second-largest industry and [supports](#) 70,000 jobs. Amid the tourism downturn, New Hampshire hotels, inns, and other lodging establishments saw [lower](#) visitor spending in 2025 compared to 2024, according to state government data. Likely as a result of this, **employment at those businesses declined last year**, based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data analyzed by the Joint Economic Committee – Minority.

In states along the U.S.-Canada border, the decline in Canadian tourism has been particularly hard. Last summer, during the state’s peak tourism season, a state official told the *New Hampshire Bulletin* that the number of Canadian tourists was [down](#) roughly 30 percent. In total, New Hampshire state parks received about 1,200 camping reservations from Canadians in 2025, [down](#) 65 percent from approximately 3,400 the year before.

Nevada

Las Vegas had 3 million [fewer](#) visitors in 2025 than in 2024 – a 7.5 percent decline and the first drop since 2020 – based on data from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority analyzed by the Committee. At Harry Reid International Airport (LAS), Southern Nevada’s main gateway to welcome visitors, air passenger traffic fell about 6 percent last year. Canadian visitors [fell](#) more than 17 percent.

Amid the decline in visitors, Las Vegas hotels reported [higher](#) vacancy rates and lower revenue per available room in 2025 than in 2024. Convention attendance also fell for the year

The slump in tourism has already harmed employment in the region. In the Las Vegas–Henderson–North Las Vegas metro area, employment at hotels, inns, and other lodging establishments [declined](#) in 2025, based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data analyzed by the Committee.

Nevada’s rural small businesses have also been affected. An inn owner and member of the tourism board in White Pine County, which is home to Great Basin National Park, reported that visitation to the county has [declined](#) about 7 percent.



North Dakota



In North Dakota, the most recent state data from February show that air passenger arrivals are [down](#) 22 percent compared to a year ago. In addition, the most recent data from March show that border crossings from Canada have been [lower](#) than the same time a year earlier for 14 straight months since February 2025.

North Dakota’s [state parks](#) and all three of its National Park Sites – Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site, and Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site – received fewer visitors in 2025 than in 2024, based on a Committee analysis of data from the state and the National Park Service.

The decline in visitors has impacted North Dakota hotels, which experienced [higher](#) vacancy rates and made less revenue per available room in 2025 compared to 2024. As a result, **employment in the hotel and lodging sector declined 5.6 percent last year**, based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data analyzed by the Committee, and employment in the leisure and hospitality sector overall declined 4.8 percent.

Amid economic uncertainty, many American families can no longer afford a vacation

Committee analysis of a leading [survey](#) of consumer confidence shows fewer Americans plan to take a domestic vacation in the next six months compared to when Trump took office. The personal savings rate has [fallen](#) to a three-year low, which means many households have a smaller financial cushion for discretionary expenses like travel. In addition, nearly [half](#) of Americans say they tapped into their savings to cover routine expenses last year.

Domestic air passenger traffic, a widely used measure of domestic tourism activity, weakened last year. There were more than 10.7 million [fewer](#) domestic passenger boardings in 2025 than in 2024, based on data from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. Since 2009, only one other year – 2020, during the pandemic – saw a decline in domestic air passenger traffic.

Now, amid Trump’s reckless war with Iran, travel has become even less affordable. A recent report by the Joint Economic Committee – Minority found that **since the start of the war, Americans have paid more than \$16 billion [more](#) at the pump**. High gas prices have stretched families’ budgets and make justifying travel much harder. In addition, amid jet fuel shortages, airlines have [raised](#) ticket prices and cut routes, leaving travelers with fewer flight options.

The number of visitors to National Parks, Historic Parks, Battlefields and other National Park System sites dropped by 15 million last year, costing nearby communities an estimated \$1.3 billion in lost revenue

The National Park System (NPS), which [includes](#) 63 major parks and 370 other sites like National Historical Parks and National Battlefields, is a pillar of America’s tourism economy. In 2024, a record-high 332 million park visitors [spent](#) \$29 billion in communities near NPS sites, including \$11 billion on lodging, \$5.7 billion at restaurants, and \$2.6 billion on recreation. Visitor spending generated 340,100 jobs and \$18.8 billion in wages.

Since President Trump took office, however, the National Park Service has [lost](#) 24% of its staff, after Trump [laid off](#) thousands of national park and forest service workers. Last summer, [more](#) than 90 sites reported severe problems stemming from staff shortages, such as not having enough staff to maintain trails or clean park bathrooms. Trump has also [increased](#) fees for international visitors, charging non-resident visitors \$100 per person to enter the most popular national parks, which discourages them from coming to spend money at communities near the parks.

Data from the National Park Service analyzed by the Committee show that more than **two-thirds of national park system sites received fewer visitors in 2025 than in 2024, and that the system overall saw 15 million fewer visitors. A reduction of that size means communities near park sites lost an estimated \$1.3 billion in revenue**, assuming each visitor spent the same amount in 2025 as in 2024. If visitor numbers had instead grown by 2 percent, like they did in 2024, national park sites would have generated \$567 million in additional revenue in 2025. **This means that the drop in park visitors meant that communities near park sites experienced a shortfall of \$1.9 billion in revenue in 2025 compared to where they could have been if visits had increased.**

The decline in national park system visitors has affected states across the country. **Thirty-three states received fewer visitors to their national park sites in 2025 than in 2024, with an average decline of 7.8 percent.** Even the most popular destinations saw a decline, with the number of visitors to the Grand Canyon down 10 percent, Bryce Canyon down 21 percent, and Great Smoky Mountain down 5 percent.

These Twenty States Saw the Largest Estimated Loss in Local Spending due to Declining Park Visitors in 2025		
State	Decline Visitors in 2025	Loss in Local Spending
Utah	-9%	-\$185 Million
Arizona	-13%	-\$184 Million
New York	-18%	-\$103 Million
Virginia	-7%	-\$89 Million
Tennessee	-5%	-\$86 Million
Georgia	-15%	-\$66 Million
Massachusetts	-6%	-\$55 Million
Pennsylvania	-11%	-\$48 Million
North Carolina	-2%	-\$46 Million
Missouri	-14%	-\$39 Million
Colorado	-4%	-\$33 Million
Montana	-4%	-\$33 Million
New Jersey	-13%	-\$30 Million
California	-1%	-\$25 Million
Michigan	-6%	-\$20 Million
Arkansas	-6%	-\$18 Million
Nevada	-4%	-\$14 Million
New Mexico	-7%	-\$13 Million
Texas	-3%	-\$8 Million
Indiana	-5%	-\$8 Million

Source: U.S. National Park Service

Note: Visitor estimates exclude the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Edgar Allan Poe NHS, and Harriet Tubman NHP for both 2024 and 2025, due to insufficient data.