‘Deeply disturbing portrait of America’: Nicolle Wallace rips GOP over looming SNAP cutoff

“It is awful when anyone in America goes hungry, and it is a choice — it’s Donald Trump’s choice,” she said.
By Allison Detzel, MSNBC, Oct. 28, 2025

Come Saturday, the 42 million Americans who depend on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, will be forced to go without benefits due to the ongoing government shutdown. On Monday’s “Deadline: White House,” Nicolle Wallace placed the blame for the looming lapse entirely on the president and the Republican Party. “It is awful when anyone in America goes hungry, and it is a choice,” she said, “it’s Donald Trump’s choice.” The MSNBC host noted this isn’t the first time the administration has slashed food assistance for some of America’s most vulnerable. In March, it cut approximately $500 million in aid for food banks. “That $300 million that Donald Trump is spending on making a gold ballroom where the East Wing once stood, and the $230 million he’s trying to get us, the American taxpayers, to reimburse him for being under criminal investigation, they add up to roughly the same amount of money he has cut from America’s food banks,” Wallace said.

The MSNBC host called the split-screen of Trump’s White House renovations and the impending cuts “a deeply disturbing portrait of America,” adding, “the images of Donald Trump destroying —with an actual wrecking ball — the actual East Wing of the White House, while Americans are about to go without food stamps, is a snapshot of America that will live forever.” Wallace also called out the president for pushing “policies that will hurt the parts of the coalition he used to publicly speak out for.” “Food insecurity in America is a lot more common than anybody can imagine, and it knows no party affiliation,” she explained. “It does not care who you voted for, and the fact that Trump and all the Republicans in Congress are opting into this tragedy, this sort of shameful thing in America in 2025, should be front-page news all over the place.”

On Nov. 1, pain of government shutdown will deepen for many Americans

By James Pindell The Boston Globe, October 28, 2025

The day after Halloween brings more than just leftover candy comas. It may mark a genuinely terrifying turning point for many Americans. On Nov. 1, the impact of the federal government shutdown marks the deepest pain point yet. By Saturday morning, the federal budget impasse won’t just be about politics. It will begin to land in grocery store checkout lines, in paystubs for federal workers, and in inboxes from health insurance companies. The first bad sign: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits that low-income households rely on risk being interrupted because states cannot receive the reimbursement without a continuing budget. Nationally, the warning is clear, but here in Massachusetts, it means the roughly 1.11 million people – about 16 percent of the state population – who received SNAP benefits in fiscal year 2024 won’t get them.

Early-childhood programs are next. The Head Start Program, crucial for low-income preschoolers and their families, is fully impacted. Grant cycles begin throughout the year, and if the shutdown persists into November, programs in over 40 states will not receive their operational funding. That means classrooms may close, teachers may be laid off, and the kids most dependent on these services will lose access, and somehow, child care will need to be immediately found (or some parents may drop out of the workforce entirely). Meanwhile, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), serving pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and young children, is expected to run out of federal support. That means some mothers and infants risk losing food-benefit cards, nutrition education, and breastfeeding support, just as colder weather and holiday-season pressures mount.

Want more? Then consider the spike in health insurance premiums coming for everyone. It’s the issue where Democrats have tried to take a stand by refusing to vote for the House Republican-passed measure to fund the government. Nov. 1 also kicks off open enrollment for marketplace plans under the Affordable Care Act and most employer-based insurance plans. For many this year, the premium letters arrive with major cost shocks. Nationally, insurers in ACA marketplaces are seeking median premium increases around 18 percent for 2026, with many carriers citing the potential expiration of enhanced premium tax credits as a key driver. In Massachusetts, state officials warn that if the enhanced tax credits expire as scheduled, average premium increases could amount to $1,300 or more per year for typical enrollees. To be clear, this is all separate from the federal shutdown. It is because a pandemic-era law that issued these subsidies will expire by the end of the year unless further action occurs.

But there is a more obvious impact of the government shutdown on the federal workers and contractors. Because the House has been out of session for weeks and no full-year appropriations were passed by the Oct. 1 deadline, thousands of additional federal employees face the prospect of missing their first whole paycheck in November. For the region, that means local businesses will find their customer base tightening. Notably, the largest union of federal workers came out in favor of ending the shutdown on Monday morning. “It’s time for our leaders to start focusing on how to solve problems for the American people, rather than on who is going to get the blame for a shutdown that Americans dislike,” said American

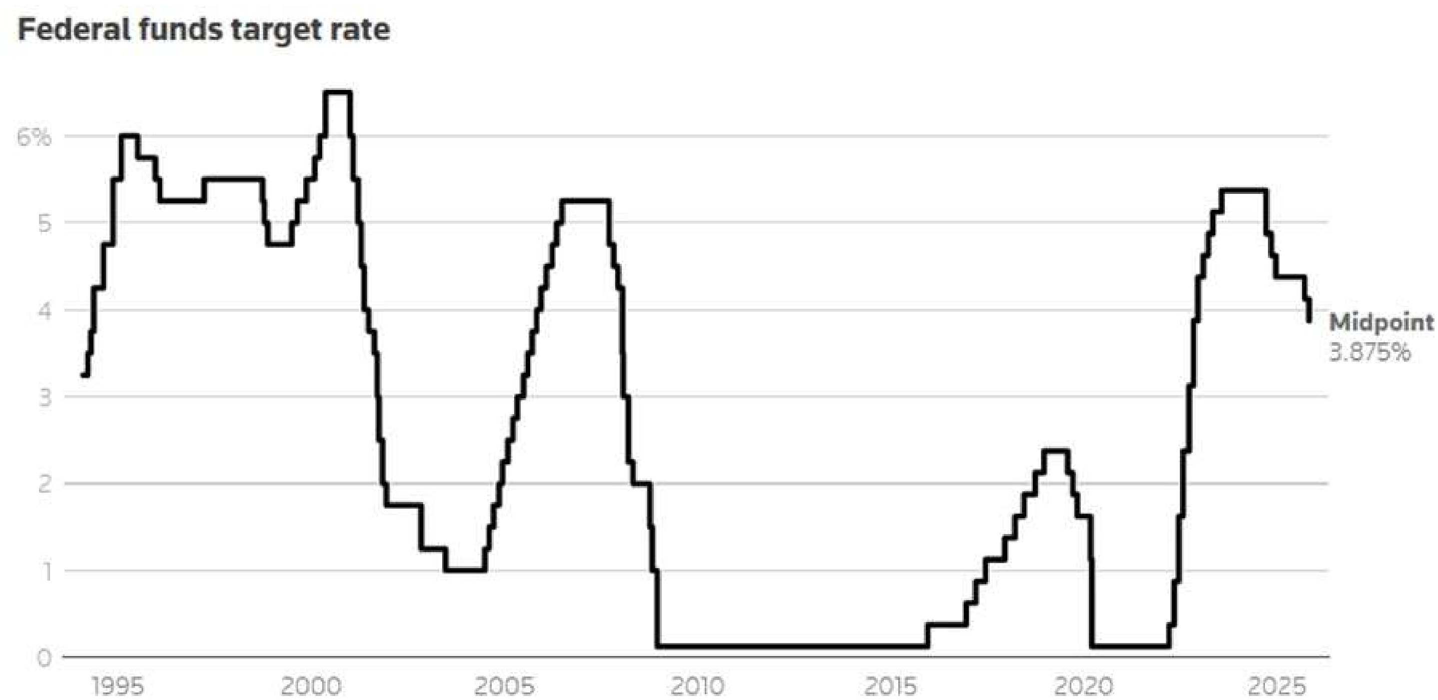
Federation of Government Employees president Everett Kelley. Remember, this includes staff of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and air traffic controllers who are working without pay as travelers gear up for the busy Thanksgiving rush. While they are considered "essential," the backlog of unpaid wages and agency strain may ripple into delays, morale drops, and increased risk.

There is a serious question about how the military will get paid if this funding impasse drags on. While service members continue to report for duty, the fact that Congress may not act raises the disturbing possibility of missed paychecks for troops. Trump found a way to pay them through October, but that money is running out. How did we arrive at this date of reckoning? The funding deadline was Oct. 1, and Congress did not pass a funding bill. Since the House is now recessed, there's no immediate path forward before Saturday. Officials in the Commonwealth have warned that without federal action, the safety net will begin to fray. For example, state leadership joined calls urging Congress to extend the enhanced premium tax credits precisely because the impacts are concentrated here. Hunger advocacy groups estimate that one in three Massachusetts households faces some degree of food insecurity. It would be tempting to treat the shutdown as mere political theater up to this point, but for many households, it is the real crisis point.

Fed lowers rates, but Powell suggests move may be the last of 2025

By Howard Schneider, Reuters, October 29, 2025

WASHINGTON - A policy divide within the U.S. central bank and a lack of federal government data may put another interest rate cut out of reach this year, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said on Wednesday, as he acknowledged the threats that officials see to the job market but also the risky nature of making further rate moves without a fuller picture of the economy. The Fed on Wednesday cut interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point, as expected, as a way to temper any further weakening of the job market. But the central bank's new policy statement included several references to the lack of official data during a federal government shutdown, and Powell told reporters later that policymakers are likely to become more cautious if it deprives them of further job and inflation reports.



"We're going to collect every scrap of data we can find, evaluate it and think carefully about it. And that's our job," Powell said in a press conference after a two-day policy meeting, as he ticked off private data the Fed can use, along with its own in-house surveys of business executives and less formal interviews with a range of contacts around the country. "If you asked me could it affect ... the December meeting, I'm not saying it's going to, but yeah, you could imagine that. You know, what do you do if you're driving in the fog? You slow down." His comments show the developing dilemma for the Fed as a budget dispute between the Trump administration and Democrats in Congress extends into a second month, with the government unable to carry out surveys and produce reports that are key to central bankers' policy decisions - in this case possibly delaying rate cuts that President Donald Trump himself wants. Beyond the data issues, Powell said there were "strongly differing views" among his Fed colleagues about the appropriate path for monetary policy moving forward, with "a growing chorus now ... feeling like maybe this is where we should at least wait a cycle" before cutting rates again.

Financial markets responded to Powell's remarks by reducing bets on another rate cut at the Fed's December 9-10 meeting, a prospect now given roughly two-to-one odds, with the S&P 500 (.SPX) index ending the day largely flat after giving up earlier gains. "Powell explicitly signaled a break between this and future meetings," as he manages a policy-setting committee that agreed to consecutive rate cuts in September and October even as many of its members remain concerned that inflation is expected to rise through the remainder of 2025, said Michael Pearce, deputy chief U.S. economist at Oxford Economics. Even those who have emphasized the possible weakness in the job market agree the Fed should now move carefully. The economy continues to throw off mixed signals, Powell said, with "bifurcated" consumers stressed at the low end of the income distribution but those at the upper end spending robustly, and economic growth buoyed by business investment even if that is not translating into strong job growth.

The latest rate cut drew dissents from two policymakers, with Fed Governor Stephen Miran again calling for a deeper reduction in borrowing costs and Kansas City Fed President Jeffrey Schmid favoring no cut at all given ongoing inflation. It was only the third time since 1990, according to data from the St. Louis Fed, that policymakers had dissented in different policy directions, a sign of the split opinion at the central bank about where the economy is headed.

A 'SOLID' POLICY DECISION

Powell still called the Fed's 10-2 vote in favor of lowering the benchmark interest rate to the 3.75%-4.00% range a "solid" endorsement of easing policy to help support a gradually cooling labor market. But "there were strongly differing views about how to proceed in December," Powell said, an unusually blunt comment about an upcoming meeting, something Fed chiefs usually shy away from. "A further reduction in the policy rate at the December meeting is not a foregone conclusion. Far from it, policy is not on a preset course," he said. Powell said his own view is that the current policy rate remains "modestly restrictive" and is still putting some downward pressure on inflation, which he said as a base case will likely rise temporarily in coming months due to the Trump administration's import tariffs, but then fall. "I think it would not be appropriate to just ignore or assume away the inflation issue; at the same time I think the risk of higher, more persistent inflation has declined significantly since April," Powell said, adding that the Fed would resume its rate cuts at some point. "I think we are trying to get to the end of this cycle with the labor market in a good place and with inflation on its way to 2% or at 2%."

Fed policymakers acknowledged the limits in their decision-making process posed by the government shutdown, dating their view of the unemployment rate to August - the month of the last official jobs release - while noting that "available indicators suggest" the economy continued growing at a moderate pace. Inflation has not risen as strongly as initially expected on the back of the White House's new import taxes, but nevertheless has climbed from around 2.3% in April to about 2.7% in August, according to the last official estimate released for the Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index before the shutdown. The Fed uses the PCE to set its 2% inflation target, and in projections issued in September policymakers expected it to rise to 3% by the end of this year. The Fed also announced on Wednesday that it will restart limited purchases of Treasury securities after money markets showed signs that liquidity was becoming scarce, a condition it has pledged to avoid. The decision to end the balance sheet drawdown will keep the total amount of the central bank's roughly $6.61 trillion in holdings steady on a month-to-month basis as of December 1, but shift its portfolio by reinvesting the proceeds of maturing mortgage-backed securities into Treasury bills.