

SUPPORTING MATERIALS: D

PRESS COVERAGE OF FIRING OF BLS COMMISSIONER McENTARFER, AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 2025

D.1 CONTEXT

The Trump Administration fired Erika McEntarfer, the commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), on August 1, 2025. Dr. McEntarfer was nominated by President Biden, confirmed by the U.S. Senate in January 2024, and was in the second year of a four-year term when she was dismissed.¹

The firing was in response to BLS issuing large revisions to its estimates of payroll jobs, which the administration said was deliberately done by Dr. McEntarfer to embarrass the president. In fact, the commissioner has no role in producing these estimates and does not see them until shortly before their scheduled release. In addition, BLS has always adhered to its fundamental responsibilities to produce objective statistics for use by policymakers and the public as prescribed by Title III of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policy-Making Act of 2018 and other regulations, directives, and documents.

The press coverage of Dr. McEntarfer's firing was voluminous to an extent unprecedented in the history of the federal statistical system, as far as the ASA FedStat Health Project could determine. (In contrast, the ASA project team could find no coverage of Dr. McEntarfer's confirmation in January 2024.) This document compares, to the extent possible, the coverage in the first four days after the firing to similar events, and also examines the coverage during August–September by two major outlets, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. It speculates on the reasons for and implications of such extensive coverage. Because of time and resource constraints, the analysis is preliminary at best. The hope is that scholars will investigate further.²

D.2 PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

D.2.1 Coverage During August 1–4, 2025

The news of Dr. McEntarfer's firing began to spread in the media around 2:30 pm Eastern on Friday, August 1, 2025. Coverage mushroomed and, from the beginning, had a tone of shock and dismay (see Box D-1, reproducing the ABC News article), although some outlets supported the action (see Box D-2, reproducing the *New York Post's* article).³

¹The 1884 law establishing BLS contains the following language: "The Bureau of Labor Statistics shall be under the charge of a Commissioner of Labor Statistics, who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; he shall hold his office for four years, unless sooner removed, and shall receive a salary" ([29 U.S. Code § 3 - Commissioner; appointment and tenure of office; compensation | U.S. Code | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute](#)).

²In addition, Supporting Materials: E lists 23 statements issued by professional associations and other organizations in August–September in response to the McEntarfer firing, which emphasized the need for objective federal statistics.

³NOTE: All boxes and tables are at the end of the document.

Table D-1 lists news outlets (excluding those mentions solely on video) identified in an internet search for articles on Dr. McEntarfer's firing for August 1–4 (Friday–Monday), 2025. The table contains 114 entries over the four days, representing 86 unique outlets: 69 outlets appear to have published only 1 article over these 4 days; 9 outlets published articles on 2 days; 5 published articles on 3 days; and 3 published articles on all 4 days.⁴ We believe the unduplicated count of 86 outlets is likely an underestimate.

The full range of political opinion is represented, from the *Washington Examiner* and *New York Post* on the right to *The New Republic* on the left. Coverage was heaviest on Friday (44 articles) and Monday (31 articles). A number of public radio stations across the country (counted as one outlet) reported on the firing on August 4 (Monday). The firing also received international coverage, particularly from the business press. Coverage continued throughout August and into September (see coverage by the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* in D.2.4 below).

D.2.2 Comparison with Coverage of Similar Events

In contrast to the extensive coverage of the firing of Dr. McEntarfer, the project team could find barely a half dozen articles on the forced reassignment of Mary Bohman, administrator of the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS), to another position in USDA in August 2018. Dr. Bohman had clashed with USDA officials about the role of ERS as a statistical agency and its agenda, which historically had included analysis of agricultural trade and assistance programs (see, e.g., [The shakeup at ERS has already started - POLITICO](#)). Similarly, the team could find only about eight articles on the firing of Dr. Larry Greenfeld, director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), in August 2005, when he refused to alter a summary of results from a BJS survey of traffic stops to suit Justice Department political appointees (see, e.g., [Profiling Report Leads to a Clash And a Demotion - The New York Times](#)).

The firing of Peggy Carr, commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in February 2025 also attracted relatively little press attention.⁵ For the period Monday, February 24—Thursday, February 27, 2025, the ASA FedStat Health Project found 11 articles together with extensive coverage by public radio stations (see Table D-2). Dr. Carr's firing (formally, she was put on administrative leave and subsequently retired from federal service) was concurrent with the efforts of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to drastically downsize the research arm of the Department of Education, which includes NCES. It also followed on the release of results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which showed U.S. 4th and 8th graders in 2024 performing below pre-Covid levels in reading and math ([Trump suspends the head of 'The Nation's Report Card' | WXXI News](#)). Note that major news outlets, such as *The New York Times*, did not cover Dr. Carr's firing at the time. The Times returned to Dr. Carr in an August 2025 article on the loss of federal appointments by Black women (see [In Trump's Federal Work Force Cuts, Black Women Are Among the Hardest Hit - The New York Times](#)).

D.2.3 Coverage, August–September, 2025, New York Times & Wall Street Journal

Table D-3 shows articles published by *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* during the period from Dr. McEntarfer's firing on August 1, 2025, to the withdrawal of the administration's nominee to replace Dr. McEntarfer two months later. Both outlets published multiple articles during August 1–4 (9 each). Instead of being overshadowed with other news, the matter continued to draw press attention: both the *Journal* and the *Times* published articles from August 5 into September, with the *Journal* outdoing the *Times* 17 to 7 articles during the period, perhaps reflecting the *Journal's* focus on business concerns.

D.2.4 Why Was Coverage of the BLS Commissioner's Firing So Extensive, and Does It Matter?

We can only surmise the factors behind the extensive coverage of the firing of BLS commissioner McEntarfer. They likely include:

- The critical importance of the payroll employment estimates and other economic indicators produced by BLS for policymaking by the Federal Reserve, the behavior of the stock markets, and business decision-making, which, in turn, affect the U.S. and world economies.

⁴Some outlets published more than one article on a given day, but that is not reflected in Table D-1.

⁵Dr. Carr was appointed by President Biden as commissioner in August 2021 to serve a six-year term.

- The blatant nature of the firing: the President made no attempt to frame his actions in accordance with long-standing norms about the need for statistical agency professional autonomy but, instead, accused Dr. McEntarfer of deliberately trying to undercut him.

The volume, political range, and long tail of the coverage, which largely took exception to the abrupt firing of the BLS commissioner, sent a message about the importance of objective statistics on the economy and the necessity to protect BLS and other federal statistical agencies from unwarranted political interference. The statements issued by at least 23 organizations (see Supporting Materials: E) sent the same message. In the short run, the coverage likely played a role in forestalling the confirmation of the administration's first nominee for BLS commissioner, who was generally panned for lack of qualifications and extreme partisanship (see, e.g., [White House withdraws E.J. Antoni's nomination to lead BLS - POLITICO](#)). Whether there will be adequate resources forthcoming for BLS and other statistical agencies or a commitment to modernization and statistical integrity protections due to this coverage or other factors is unknowable.

BOX D.1

ABC NEWS ARTICLE ON FIRING OF BLS COMMISSIONER

Trump fires BLS commissioner after weak jobs report and baseless claim of 'faked' stats

Fresh jobs data showed a major slowdown of hiring in recent months.

President Donald Trump fired the commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics on Friday after a new jobs report showed a major slowdown of hiring in recent months.

In a social media post, Trump volleyed sharp criticism and baseless accusations at Erika McEntarfer, a Biden appointee who was confirmed by the Senate in 2024.

"I have directed my Team to fire this Biden Political Appointee, IMMEDIATELY," Trump said, after baselessly accusing McEntarfer of having "faked" statistics.

McEntarfer has served in the federal government for 20 years, including positions at the U.S. Census Bureau, the Executive Office of the President, and the Department of Treasury, according to the BLS website. [Note: This information is no longer on the BLS website.]

The U.S. added 73,000 jobs in July, according to data from the BLS. The figure marked a slowdown from 147,000 jobs added in the previous month. The unemployment rate ticked up to 4.2%, keeping it at near-historic lows.

The report provided new estimates for two previous months, significantly dropping the government's estimate of jobs added in May and June. The fresh data indicated a notable slowdown in hiring as Trump's tariffs took hold over recent months.

Trump criticized McEntarfer over the revisions, saying without evidence that the revisions suggested jobs statistics had been "manipulated." The BLS routinely revises estimates of jobs added in previous months.

In a follow-up social media post on Friday afternoon, Trump claimed the latest jobs report was "RIGGED in order to make the Republicans, and ME, look bad."

Asked by reporters as he departed the White House on Friday about the reason for McEntarfer's firing, Trump said he believes the economy is doing well and claimed the latest jobs numbers were "phony."

"I believe the numbers were phony just like they were before the election, and there were other times," Trump said, pointing to a previous revision in the jobs numbers last year that he claimed, without evidence, was an attempt to benefit Democrats heading into the election. "So you know what I did? I fired her. And you know what? I did the right thing."

Raymond Robertson, professor of economics at Texas A&M University, voiced alarm about the firing.

"This is disastrous," Robertson said. "To have a president who refuses to accept the numbers and then fire people because he doesn't like the numbers ... this is part of trying to bend the numbers to political will."

While the Trump administration selects a replacement, BLS Deputy Commissioner William Wiatrowski will serve as acting commissioner, according to a post on [X](#) from Secretary of Labor Lori Chavez-DeRemer.

Wiatrowski served as acting commissioner of the BLS from January 2017 to March 2019, making up a large share of Trump's first term in office, the BLS [website](#) said.

The Trump administration described the downward revisions as an unwelcome sign for the U.S. economy.

"Obviously, they're not what we want to see," Stephen Miran, chair of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, said on Friday.

Miran blamed the weak performance in part on uncertainty tied to the fate of Trump's domestic spending legislation as well as the ultimate outcome of tariff policy. Congress passed Trump's spending measure earlier this month; more recently, Trump announced a fresh round of tariffs late Thursday.

"Both of those sources of uncertainty are resolved," Miran said. "We expect things to get materially stronger from here, now that our policies are starting to sort into place."

In May, the U.S. added 19,000 jobs, much lower than a previously estimated total of 139,000 jobs, the BLS said. While in June, the economy added just 14,000 jobs, revising downward a previous estimate of 147,000 jobs.

"Not only was this a much weaker than forecast payrolls number, the monster downward revisions to the past two months inflicts a major blow to the picture of labor market robustness," Seema Shah, chief global strategist at Principal Asset Management, told ABC News in a statement.

The jobs report arrives days after a separate government report [showed](#) better-than-expected economic growth. U.S. GDP increased at a 3% annualized rate over three months ending in June, the report said.

The robust reading suggested the economy has continued to avert a significant tariff-induced cooldown. A one-off statistical quirk tied to a drop-off of imports appeared to partially account for the surge, however.

SOURCE: [Trump fires BLS commissioner after weak jobs report and baseless claim of 'faked' stats - ABC News](#) (Max Zahn, August 1, 2025, 3:03 pm ET).

NOTE: Remainder of article on the Federal Reserve deleted.

NEW YORK POST ARTICLE ON FIRING OF BLS COMMISSIONER

Trump fires Biden-appointed Bureau of Labor Statistics commissioner after bad jobs report: 'Numbers were RIGGED'

[President Trump](#) ordered the dismissal Friday of the head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), hours after the economic data collection agency released a report showing unemployment ticked up last month.

Now-former BLS Commissioner [Erika McEntarfer](#), an appointee of former President Joe Biden, triggered Trump's fury after her agency announced [lower than expected employment gains in July](#) and revised the numbers for May and June downward by a total of 258,000 jobs.

The president accused McEntarfer of manipulating the data and charged that she had done so in the past.

McEntarfer was nominated by Biden to head BLS in 2023. She was confirmed by the Senate for the post last year after previously serving in the Biden White House.

"I believe the numbers were phony, just like they were before the election," Trump told reporters as he left the White House to spend the weekend at his Bedminster, NJ club. "So you know what I did? I fired her."

A BLS spokesperson confirmed McEntarfer "was terminated today" and Deputy Commissioner William Wiatrowski will take over on an acting basis.

McEntarfer, a career federal employee, was confirmed by the Senate to lead BLS in January 2024 after previously serving as a senior economist at the White House Council of Economic Advisors under Biden.

Trump explained in a Truth Social post that he was "just informed" that the nation's employment reports were "being produced by a Biden Appointee" and charged that McEntarfer "faked the Jobs Numbers before the Election to try and boost Kamala's chances of Victory."

"This is the same Bureau of Labor Statistics that overstated the Jobs Growth in March 2024 by approximately 818,000 and, then again, right before the 2024 Presidential Election, in August and September, by 112,000," the president wrote. "These were Records — No one can be that wrong?"

Last August's revision of job growth for the 12 months ending in March 2024 – the largest downward revision to US payroll figures since 2009 – [drew outrage](#) from some Republican lawmakers, who suggested the numbers were intentionally fudged to boost the Harris-Biden administration.

"We need accurate Jobs Numbers," Trump wrote, noting that McEntarfer would be "replaced with someone much more competent and qualified."

"Important numbers like this must be fair and accurate, they can't be manipulated for political purposes," he continued. "McEntarfer said there were only 73,000 Jobs added (a shock!) but, more importantly, that a major mistake was made by them, 258,000 Jobs downward, in the prior two months."

"Similar things happened in the first part of the year, always to the negative."

Trump argued the numbers were "rigged" to make him and Republicans "look bad."

Sen. Roger Marshall (R-Kan.), who demanded testimony from McEntarfer last year over the Biden-era job stats revisions, praised Trump for removing her from the top BLS post.

"I have been raising concerns for the past year about inaccurate job numbers put out by Dr. Erika McEntarfer," Marshall wrote on X. "Her cooked-up numbers have misled the American people for too long."

"Glad President [Trump] is going to clean this up."

Trump doubled-down in a separate social media post, arguing that the July BLS report was “RIGGED in order to make the Republicans, and ME, look bad.”

Trump told reporters Friday he has “about three” people in mind to replace McEntarfer.

“I have a lot of good candidates. I will say, everybody wants it,” he said. “We’re gonna put someone in who can be honest.”

SOURCE: [Trump fires Biden-appointed Bureau of Labor Statistics commissioner after bad jobs report: ‘Numbers were RIGGED’](#) (Victor Nava, August 1, 2025, 6:08 pm ET)

TABLE D-1. Media Outlets with Articles on Firing of BLS Commissioner, 8/1–4, 2025

August 1, 2025	August 2, 2025	August 3, 2025	August 4, 2025
Outlets with One Article, 8/1–4, 2025			
ABC News	Barron's	Benzinga	Boston Globe
AOL	BBC (UK)	Daily Beast	Business Outstanders
The Atlanta Voice	Business Standard	Fed Scoop	CNN
The Atlantic	Chuck Kyles Substack	Fox Business	Contrarian
Belgrade (MT) News	Economic Times (India)	The Free Press (FL)	Daily Mail (UK)
Business Insider	Financial Times (UK)	Globe & Mail (Canada)	Deseret News (Utah)
The Carson Report	Hindustan Times (India)	Honolulu Star-Advertiser	EconoTimes (Korea)
CBS News	Rolling Stone	India Today	Morningstar
China Daily	TIME	Just the News	New Republic
Daily Voice		Market Watch	PBS News Hour
Forbes		Mother Jones	Politically Simple
Ground News (Canada)		UPI	Public Radio (numerous outlets ran NPR piece)
Huffington Post		Washington Examiner	San Antonio Express
NBC News		Yahoo—Canada	Stocktwits
NBC LA		Yahoo—New Zealand	Straight Arrow News
New York Daily News			Washington Stand (DC)
Politifact			
Public Radio (KSAT, TX)			
Reuters			
Roll Call			
Scotsman Guide			
Sherwood News			
Slate Magazine			
Street Insider			
Trading View			
Vox			
Wikipedia			
WTOP News (DC)			
Xinhua News Agency			
Outlets with More Than One Article, 8/1–4, 2025			
AP News	AP News		
	Axios		Axios
CNBC		CNBC	CNBC
Fortune			Fortune
The Hill		The Hill	The Hill
The Independent (UK)			The Independent (UK)
New York Magazine			New York Magazine
New York Post			New York Post
New York Times	New York Times	New York Times	New York Times
Newsweek	Newsweek		Newsweek
	NPR		NPR

August 1, 2025	August 2, 2025	August 3, 2025	August 4, 2025
Outlets with More Than One Article, 8/1–4, 2025			
Politico			Politico
Seeking Alpha	Seeking Alpha	Seeking Alpha	Seeking Alpha
US News & World Report		US News & World Report	
Wall Street Journal	Wall Street Journal	Wall Street Journal	Wall Street Journal
Washington Post		Washington Post	Washington Post
Yahoo		Yahoo	Yahoo

SOURCE: Compiled by project team from internet searches.

TABLE D-2. Media Outlets with Articles on Firing of NCES Commissioner, 2/26–3/1/2025

February 24	February 25	February 26	February 27
Conservative News Daily	The 74	Ed Source	CBS6 (Albany NY)
Washington Examiner	American Faith	Public radio (several dozen stations ran NPR piece)	Inside Higher Ed
	Education Week	Times of India	
	LexyDigital (FL)		
	Yahoo		

SOURCE: Compiled by project team from internet searches.

TABLE D-3. Coverage of Firing of BLS Commissioner by Two Outlets, 8/1–10/1, 2025

Date	<i>The Wall Street Journal</i> Title - Author	<i>The New York Times</i> Title-Author
08/01/05	Trump Orders Firing of Bureau of Labor Statistics Chief - WSJ - Justin Lahart, Alex Leary, Matt Grossman	Trump Fires BLS Commissioner, Claiming Weak Jobs Numbers Were 'Rigged' - The New York Times - Ben Casselman and Tony Romm
	Trump Orders Firing of Bureau of Labor Statistics Chief After Weak Jobs Report - Alex Leary	Opinion The Point: Conversations and insights about the moment. - The New York Times - Jason Furman
08/02/25	Erika McEntarfer, The Economist Trump Targeted Over 'Rigged' Jobs Data - WSJ - Matt Grossman	Until Trump Fired Her, She Was an Economist With Bipartisan Support - The New York Times - Ashley Ahn
08/03/25	Trump Seeks Bigger Overhaul at Labor Statistics Bureau, Adviser Says - WSJ - Brian Schwartz	President to Name Labor Statistics Official in Days After Firing Last One - The New York Times - News staff
	Trump Claims the Jobs Report Was Rigged. Was It? - WSJ - Allysia Finley	Trump Fired America's Economic Data Collector. History Shows the Perils. - The New York Times - Ben Casselman
	The Bureau of Labor Denial - WSJ - Editorial Board	Trump Fires Official Over Jobs Report, Echoing an Authoritarian Playbook - The New York Times - Peter Baker
		Opinion Why Trump's Meddling in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Matters - The New York Times - George Akerlof
08/04/25	Real Strains Inside the BLS Made It Vulnerable to Trump's Accusations - WSJ - Matt Grossman	After Trump's Firing of BLS Commissioner, Republicans Fall in Line With His Criticism - The New York Times - Luke Broadwater
	Trump's BLS Firing Tests Wall Street's Reliance on Government Data - WSJ - Alexander Saeedy, Jack Pitcher, Peter Rudegeair	Opinion The America We Knew Is Rapidly Slipping Away - The New York Times - Thomas Friedman
	Trump vs. the Bureau of Labor Statistics: Why This Firing Could Burn Your Finances - Spencer Jakab	
08/05/25	Trump's Firing of BLS Chief Prompts Democrats to Propose Bill Protecting Stats-Agency Heads - WSJ - Matt Grossman	
	The Defenestration of the BLS Commissioner - WSJ - Opinion/Letters Help Wanted: A \$195,000 BLS Chief With More Than an Economics Ph.D. - WSJ - Lauren Weber	
08/06/25	What BLS Data Means for Americans' Finances - WSJ - Joe Pinsker, Heather Gillers, Ashlea Ebeling	Why the B.L.S. Regularly Revises Jobs Data - The New York Times - Ben Casselman

	<i>The Wall Street Journal</i>	<i>The New York Times</i>
Date	Title - Author	Title-Author
08/10/25	The Agenda Behind the BLS Head's Firing - WSJ - William Silber	
	Inflation Up or Down? What About Jobs? The Agency That Should Know Is on the Rocks - WSJ - Matt Gross, Brian Schwartz, Rachel Louis Ensign	
	Exclusive E.J. Antoni, Longtime Critic of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Under Consideration to Lead the Agency - WSJ - Brian Schwartz, Meredith McGraw	
	What Happens When Politicians Meddle With Economic Data: Argentina's Example - WSJ - Paul Kiernan	
08/11/25	Trump to Nominate E.J. Antoni, a Bureau of Labor Statistics Critic, to Lead Agency - WSJ - Meredith McGraw	Trump Names EJ Antoni New BLS Commissioner - The New York Times - Tony Romm, Ben Casselman, and Lydia DePillis
08/12/25	Trump Advisers Consider Changes to How Government Collects Jobs Data - WSJ - Josh Dawsey	Trump's Pick of E.J. Antoni as BLS Leader Criticized by the Right and the Left - The New York Times - Ben Casselman, Alan Rappeport, and Lydia DePillis
08/13/25		Opinion Why Economists Are Worried About Trump's B.L.S. Changes - The New York Times - Jason Furman
08/28/25	E.J. Antoni Is the Right Man for BLS - WSJ - Arthur B. Laffer	
09/04/25	What to Look for in First Jobs Report Since Trump Fired BLS Chief - WSJ - Rachel Louise Ensign	
09/05/25		BLS Data on Jobs and Consumer Prices Faces a Test of Trust - The New York Times - Ben Casselman and Jeanna Smialek
09/08/25	Exclusive White House Prepares Report Critical of Statistics Agency - WSJ - Brian Schwartz	
09/09/25	Job Revisions and the Trump Economy - WSJ - Editorial Board	
	U.S. Job Growth Revised Down by 911,000 Jobs in the Year Ended in March - WSJ - Justin Lahart	
09/16/25	Fired BLS Chief Erika McEntarfer Breaks Silence, Calls Her Dismissal a 'Dangerous Step' - WSJ - Matt Grossman	Fired by Trump, a Former Labor Official Warns Against Politicizing Economic Data - The New York Times - Tony Romm
09/30/25		White House Withdraws Nomination of E.J. Antoni, Trump's Pick to Lead BLS - The New York Times - Tony Romm, Ben Casselman, and Lydia DePillis
10/01/25	Trump White House Withdraws BLS Nominee E.J. Antoni and CFTC Nominee Brian Quintenz - WSJ - Paul Kiernan, Alexander Osipovich, Alex Leary	

SOURCE: Compiled by project team from internet searches.