



TOP STORY • MIDTERMS AND FUEL

Trump Revives Two Cancelled Rallies as Fuel Prices Weigh on Midterm Voters

Days before Tuesday's elections, the president reversed himself, while analysts warn that the cost of living could cost Republicans votes.

Written and fact-checked by AI • News Pebbles

For many American families, the price at the gas pump is now part of the election. Voters choose a new Congress in the midterm elections on Tuesday 3 November, and President Trump has just rewritten his closing schedule. On 29 October he said he was cancelling his rallies in Kansas and Iowa. One day later, a source close to the administration said he would speak at both, in person, on Sunday.

Why would a rally in Kansas matter so much? The state has gone without a Democratic senator in a full term since 1932, which makes it a hard place for that party. Even so, an Emerson College poll found Democrat Adam Hamilton, a megachurch pastor, at 49% against 45% for Republican Sen. Roger Marshall. A single poll samples only some voters, so it hints at a close race rather than a result. The new schedule also leans harder on "tele-rallies", in which Trump appears by video.

The pump is the reason analysts see risk for his party. They warn that Republicans could be punished over the cost of living, since fuel costs more than normal because of the US-Israel war on Iran. The global oil benchmark, Brent crude, briefly rose above \$117 a barrel on Friday. That is its highest level since April and more than 60% above where it stood before the war.

Oil helps set what families pay for fuel, shipping and many everyday goods. Nobody can yet say how many voters will let prices decide.



Voters in every state choose on Tuesday 3 November.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Midterm elections decide who controls Congress, and the price of fuel is something every family feels. When prices rise, voters may judge leaders by what they pay, so an oil shock far away can become a ballot-box story at home.

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WORLD • UK BUDGET

Britain's New Chancellor Offers Energy Help and Taxes Bank Profits

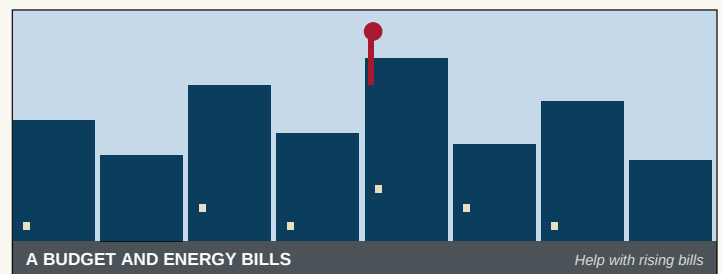
Healey's first budget gives households a one-off payment, while a weaker growth forecast limits how much he can spend.

A budget is a government's yearly plan for what it will tax and spend, and Britain's came on 28 October. Chancellor John Healey delivered it as the first of Prime Minister Andy Burnham's government. Burnham replaced Keir Starmer in July. The mood in the room was shaped by something far from London: gas and electricity prices are rising, largely because of the Middle East conflict.

That is why the headline measure is help with bills. A one-off payment of 100 pounds goes to 20 million households. Fixed fees on gas bills will be removed, and the freeze on fuel duty, a tax on petrol and diesel, will be extended.

To pay for some of it, Labour will double the surcharge on bank profits to 6% for 15 months from January. The Office for Budget Responsibility, the official forecaster, estimates this will raise 1.5 billion pounds. Healey said "Fiscal discipline is my first commitment" and kept the fiscal rules set by Rachel Reeves, which require day-to-day spending to be covered by tax receipts.

Yet the room for manoeuvre is shrinking. Growth is forecast at 1.2% this year and 1.0% in 2027, worse than expected for 2027 because of the Middle East war. Fiscal headroom for 2029-2030, the cushion before the rules are broken, falls to 15 billion pounds from 23.6 billion in March, as higher borrowing costs raise debt repayments. Healey also pledged to lift defence spending to 3% of GDP by 2030. Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch accused Burnham of delaying hard decisions, and he ruled out a snap election next year.



The one-off payment goes to 20 million UK households.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Economics links this to the lead story: when oil and gas get dearer, governments everywhere feel pressure to cushion families, and higher borrowing costs mean they have less money to do it with. Britain's payment and America's fuel-price worry are two answers to one shock.

INDIA • CYCLONE ARNAB

After Arnab, Andhra Pradesh Counts Its Losses and Credits Early Warnings

The chief minister puts preliminary damage at Rs 4,600 crore; evacuations of tens of thousands helped limit the harm.

Think of a cyclone in two halves: the days before it arrives and the days after. Arnab reached the Andhra Pradesh coast near Yanam on Wednesday 28 October, rated by the India Meteorological Department as a very severe storm, with gusts of up to 150 km/h. It lost strength within hours.

The first half is why the toll was not higher. About 50,000 people in Andhra Pradesh and about 48,000 in Odisha were asked to leave for safer ground, and at least 609 schools became shelters. A Kakinada resident named Sadiq said the alerts gave people time to get ready.

The second half is still being tallied. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu estimates the early loss at Rs 4,600 crore and says at least seven people died. Paddy fields were hit hardest, with crops on about 70,900 hectares damaged, and power failed in nearly 400 villages.

WHY THIS MATTERS

A cyclone tests preparation as much as power. Warnings, shelters and evacuations turn a very severe storm into a smaller disaster, while farm and power losses show how its cost lasts after the wind stops.

Also in India

- Odisha: over 100,000 people were evacuated in the south, and over 300 disaster response teams went into Ganjam and eight other districts.
- Relief: families leaving relief camps get 25 kg of rice and cash, and Union government teams were due to assess damage on 30 October.

ONE-LINE BRIEFS

- Canada: Carney and EU leaders, meeting in Montreal, launched an Alliance for the Future, and Canada said it would join the EU's 90 billion euro support loan for Kyiv.
- Brazil: Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva won the 25 October runoff with about 51.75% of the vote, and rival Flavio Bolsonaro has not conceded.

VOCABULARY BUILDER**Words that unlock today's news****Midterm elections**

Elections held partway through a president's term that decide who controls Congress. Today: Americans vote in them on Tuesday 3 November.

Brent crude

A widely used global benchmark price for a barrel of oil. Today: it briefly topped \$117 on Friday.

Surcharge

An extra charge added on top of a normal one. Today: Britain will double its surcharge on bank profits to 6%.

Inflation

The rate at which prices rise. Today: US inflation rose to 3.7% in September from 3.4% in August.

DID YOU KNOW?

Midterm elections get their name because they fall in the middle of a president's four-year term.

UNITED STATES • THE FED

The Fed Holds Interest Rates, but Two Officials Wanted a Rise

With inflation climbing because of energy prices, borrowing costs for families may rise before the year ends.

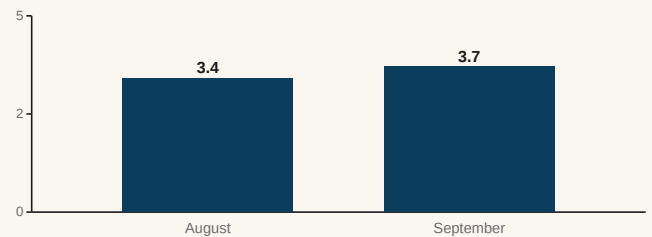
The Federal Reserve, the central bank that sets America's benchmark interest rate, decided to leave it alone on 28 October. It kept the rate at 3.75-4%, in a 10-2 vote. Interest rates set the price of borrowing, so they flow through to mortgages, car loans and credit cards.

The two votes against were not for staying put but for going higher. Governor Lisa Cook and Beth Hammack of the Cleveland Fed voted to raise rates by a quarter percentage point. Their worry is inflation, the rate at which prices rise. US annual inflation rose to 3.7% in September from 3.4% in August, with energy prices largely accounting for the surge. That links the Fed's room to the oil story playing out in the Gulf.

The Fed has already moved once this autumn. It raised rates in September, its first increase since July 2023. Policymakers are widely expected to raise them again at their next meeting on 8-9 December.

US ANNUAL INFLATION

Percent, August and September



Energy prices largely account for the rise. Source: NPR.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Interest rates decide how costly it is to borrow for a home or a car, and inflation decides how far a paycheck stretches. When the Fed weighs one against the other, families feel the result.

THINK LIKE AN ANALYST

Why might two officials want a rise now, when the rest wanted to wait? What would you want to know about whether energy prices will stay high? Who is helped, and who is hurt, when borrowing gets more expensive?

SPORTS CORNER**SPORTS CORNER: A QUIET DAY**

No verified sports results today. Back tomorrow.

WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

- Whether Trump takes the stage in Kansas and Iowa on Sunday, and what voters decide on Tuesday 3 November.
- Whether Brent crude, which briefly topped \$117 on Friday, keeps climbing.

"A price is a message: when oil costs more far away, the news arrives at home." — The Editors

You are not just reading the news — you are learning to think about it. See you in two days.