

Ernie Goss' monthly interview: <https://bit.ly/MidAmericaBCIOctober2025YouTube>  
News media assets & headshots: <https://bit.ly/MidAmericaBCIOctober2025NewsAssets>

For More Information Contact:  
Ernie Goss, PhD, (402) 598-3198  
[ernieg@creighton.edu](mailto:ernieg@creighton.edu)  
Kristen Crawford, (531) 710-4485  
[kcrawford@lukaspartners.com](mailto:kcrawford@lukaspartners.com)

## **Mid-America Manufacturing Index Advances Above Growth Neutral** *Tariffs Are Negatively Impacting Imports & Exports*

### **October 2025 Survey Highlights**

- The overall Mid-America Business Conditions Index climbed above growth neutral.
- The regional manufacturing sector shed jobs for the seventh straight month.
- For the week ending on October 18, the insured unemployment rate for the region stood at 0.7%, compared to 0.6% for the same period in 2024.
- On average, supply managers reported that tariffs had increased the prices of inputs that their firm purchased by 7.9% in 2025.
- Approximately, 53% of supply managers that purchased inputs from abroad indicated that they had re-shored a portion of purchases from abroad.
- In the October survey, only 35% of supply managers agreed with President Trump's tariff policy.

**OMAHA, Neb. (Nov. 3, 2025)** — For the second time in the past four months, the Creighton University Mid-America Business Conditions Index, a leading economic indicator for the nine-state region stretching from Minnesota to Arkansas, moved slightly above growth neutral.

**Overall Index:** The Business Conditions Index, which uses the identical methodology as the national Institute for Supply Management (ISM) and ranges between 0 and 100 with 50.0 representing growth neutral, rose to 50.5 from 49.8 in September.

“Creighton’s latest survey indicates that the regional manufacturing economy continues to move essentially sideways with elevated wholesale inflation,” said Ernie Goss, PhD, Director of Creighton University’s Economic Forecasting Group and the Jack A. MacAllister Chair in Regional Economics in the Heider College of Business. “Supply managers reported weakness in both imports and exports along with higher prices for imported goods.”

The Mid-America report is produced independently of the national ISM.

**Employment:** The October employment index increased to a frail 46.9 from 44.9 in September, marking the seventh consecutive month below the growth-neutral threshold of 50.0. “Approximately, 16% of supply managers indicated that their firm laid off workers in October,” said Goss.

In the October survey, only 35% of supply managers agreed with President Trump’s tariff policy. As stated by one supply manager, “While I think some of the tariffs were probably justified, the process in which they were implemented was haphazard at best.”

While data are not available from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, unemployment data based on workers receiving unemployment insurance at the state level are available. For the week ending on October 18, the insured unemployment rate for the region stood at 0.7%, compared to 0.6% for the same period in 2024.

Other comments from supply managers in October:

- “What the Trump administration is doing today will have positive long-term impacts on the U.S. economy and whether the U.S. will have a future as the leader of the free world.”
- “Extremely complex tariffs are all over the map and changing all the time.”
- “We are not agreeing to tariff clauses in supplier contracts that allow suppliers to increase prices. Price increases are to be negotiated on reasonable, timely and transparent clearly defined terms.”
- “Last year's butter price at the CME averaged \$2.87 a pound and topped out at \$3.18 the first week of September that year. This week's average is \$1.63. The issue is dairy commodities are down, but the retail price at the store is still priced at a three-dollar butter market, almost double what it should be.”
- “Waiting to see how the tariffs actually affect our business. Too many uncertainties.”
- “We enjoyed getting stuck with product on the water and the tariff changing from the time the shipment left port to the time it cleared customs, costing us \$10,000's. Nobody in their right mind could think that is an acceptable approach to applying tariffs.”
- “Tariffs have impacted how our business operates internationally. Products that used to be processed in our U.S. facility are now being produced elsewhere to supply the rest of the world.”

**Wholesale Prices:** The October price gauge declined slightly to 62.9 from 64.1 in September. “The regional inflation yardstick has moved into a range indicating that inflationary pressures are elevated at the wholesale level. However, due to slowing regional and U.S. economies, I expect the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates at its next meetings on December 9-10,” said Goss.

On average, supply managers reported that tariffs had increased the prices of inputs that their firm purchased by 7.9% in 2025.

As stated by one supply manager, “On non-strategic sources, suppliers are passing through tariff increases.”

**Confidence:** Looking ahead six months, economic optimism as captured by the October Business Confidence Index, increased to a frail 42.2, up from 38.2 in September. “Concerns regarding tariffs, inflation and slowing business activity restrained supply managers’ economic expectations. Only 21.1% of supply managers expect rising economic conditions for their firm over the next six months,” said Goss.

**Inventories:** The regional inventory index, reflecting levels of raw materials and supplies, climbed to 50.3 from 48.6 in September. “To offset potential rising future tariffs, supply managers expanded inventories this month,” said Goss.

Approximately, 53% of supply managers that purchased inputs internationally indicated that they had re-shored a portion of purchases from abroad.

**Trade:** Recent retaliation from higher U.S. tariffs and trade restrictions pushed new export orders or purchases from abroad lower for the last six months. New export orders sank to 40.8 from 43.4 in September. As a result of record imports for the first two months of 2025 and higher import prices, supply managers pulled back on purchasing from abroad in the last eight months. The October import index slumped to 34.0 from 34.8 in September.

Other survey components of the October Business Conditions Index were: new orders fell to 48.4 from 51.4 in September; the production index declined to 49.8 from September's 50.4; and the speed of deliveries of raw materials and supplies climbed to 57.9 from 53.7 in September. Higher readings indicate slower deliveries and/or rising supply chain disruptions or delays.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group has conducted the monthly survey of supply managers in nine states since 1994 to produce leading economic indicators of the Mid-America economy. States included in the survey are Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

Below are the state reports:

**Arkansas:** The state's October Business Conditions Index increased to 54.2 from 48.8 in September. Components from the October survey of supply managers were: new orders at 54.2; production at 53.5; delivery lead time at 60.7; inventories at 54.0; and employment at 50.6. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 1.2%, compared to 1.3% for July 2024.

**Iowa:** The state's Business Conditions Index for October fell to 46.7 from 47.4 in September. Components of the overall October index were: new orders at 44.5; production at 46.0; delivery lead time at 43.2; employment at 43.1; and inventories at 46.5. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 1.0%, unchanged from 1.0% for July 2024.

**Kansas:** The Kansas Business Conditions Index for October dropped to 46.4 from 50.9 in September. Components of the leading economic indicators from the monthly survey of supply managers for October were: new orders at 45.7; production at 43.7; delivery lead time at 52.3; employment at 42.2; and inventories at 45.6. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 0.9%, compared to 1.0% for July 2024.

**Minnesota:** The October Business Conditions Index for Minnesota increased to 48.8 from 47.6 in September. Components of the overall October index were: new orders at 46.5; production or sales at 45.0; delivery lead time at 55.1; inventories at 48.5; and employment at 43.7. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 1.0%, compared to 0.8% for July 2024.

**Missouri:** The state's October Business Conditions Index climbed to a regional high of 62.7 from 47.1 in September. Components of the overall index from the survey of supply managers for October were: new orders at 60.6; production at 59.1; delivery lead time at 69.2; inventories at 62.6; and employment at 62.0. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 0.9%, compared to 1.2% for July 2024.

**Nebraska:** The state's October Business Conditions Index advanced to 52.9 from 45.2 in September. Components of the index from the monthly survey of supply managers for October were: new orders at 50.8; production at 52.2; delivery lead time at 59.4; inventories at 52.8; and employment at 49.3. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 0.9%, compared to 1.0% for July 2024.

**North Dakota:** After 15 straight months of above growth neutral readings, the state's Business Conditions Index sank below the 50.0 threshold to 46.9 from 51.4 in September. Components of the overall index for October were: new orders at 44.8; production at 46.2; delivery lead time at 53.4; employment at 43.3; and inventories at 46.8. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 1.8%, compared to 1.3% for July 2024.

**Oklahoma:** The state's Business Conditions Index for October rose to 52.2 from 50.8 in September. Components of the overall October index were: new orders at 50.1; production at 51.3; delivery lead time at 58.7; inventories at 52.1; and employment at 48.6. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 1.2%, compared to 1.9% for July 2024.

**South Dakota:** The October Business Conditions Index for South Dakota increased to 51.2 from 47.8 in September. Components of the overall October index were: new orders at 49.1; production at 50.5; delivery lead time at 57.7; inventories at 53.0; and employment at 47.6. According to the latest published U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, the state's involuntary layoff rate for July 2025 was 0.9%, compared to 1.0% for July 2024.

Survey results for the month of November will be released on December 1, 2025, the first business day of the month.

For historical data and forecasts visit our website <https://www.creighton.edu/economicoutlook/> or <https://gossandassociates.com/>.