



The Daily Dish

Current Conditions Update

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On Wednesday Thomas Bossert, a White House adviser, stated that the Trump Administration plans to develop a system to score agencies on cybersecurity. Federal agencies will be required to follow the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) cybersecurity framework and report back to the White House regarding their agency's implementation efforts. Bossert went on to say that the administration will do everything it can to ensure that federal agencies have the resources needed to effectively tackle cybersecurity challenges.

On Tuesday Bloomberg News reported that President Trump is gearing up to sign a directive aimed at shrinking the role climate change plays in government decisions. Bloomberg reports the directive could be signed as early as this week and aims to reverse the Obama Administration's "broad approach for addressing climate change." This directive would fall in line with President Trump's vow to roll back and fully repeal regulations that he views as hindering American job growth.

Eakinomics: Current Conditions Update

Americans got three important updates on current economic conditions yesterday. First, the Census Department released information on [retail sales](#) in February. While not overwhelming, the sales showed a solid household sector. Total retail sales rose by 0.1 percent (corresponding to a 5.7 percent change from last February) and core sales (excluding autos and gasoline) were up 0.2 percent (and 4.4 percent year over year).

Meanwhile, over at the Labor Department the Bureau of Labor Statistics [released](#) the latest inflation report that showed overall increases in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 0.1 percent in February and 2.7 percent over the past year. Core inflation — excluding food and energy — rang in at 0.2 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively. These are exactly the kinds of inflation readings consistent with the Federal Reserve's inflation target.

Accordingly, the really big news was that the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee raised interest rates for the [third time](#) since the financial crisis, moving its target range to 0.75 to 1.0 percent. Once again, the Fed characterized the economy as growing at a "moderate" pace — a phrase familiar from the past several years — but also noted two changes in the economic landscape. Businesses have stepped up their spending, so the economy is no longer uniquely reliant on the household sectors. And, as noted above, inflation continued to rise and put the Fed much closer to satisfying its dual mandate of full employment and price stability.

The next big test for the economy lies with economic policy. While the Trump administration and its congressional allies have put a stop to the regulatory tsunami, little progress is evident on efforts to reform health care and then move to pro-growth tax reform.