WALLETSHOCK INFLATION BRIEFING

# Houston, TX

Prices for the Houston metro area

Basket: Eggs, Milk, Ground beef, Gasoline, Electricity, Rent, Car insurance, Prescription drugs. Timescale: 5 years. Generated 2026-11-02. Live report: https://www.walletshock.org/area?lat=29.85727&lon=-95.39304&years=5 Methodology: https://www.walletshock.org/methodology

## The picture

- Ground beef up **52.0 percent** over 5 years in the South region, the steepest move in this basket (Sep 2021 to Sep 2026). BLS APU0300703112
- Texas residential electricity up 33.2 percent since Aug 2021; CenterPoint Energy delivers power in Harris County and the state average is 15.9¢ per kWh. EIA
- The pharmaceutical and health care industries held **369 federal lobbying contracts** and filed 1,372 reports in 2025, the most of any industry behind this basket. Senate LDA
- PACs for the industries behind this basket gave $61,000 to TX-29's House candidates and $110,000 to Texas's Senate candidates. QPQ Tracker

## What rose, steepest first

| Item | Latest | 5 years | Area the number describes | Series |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ground beef** | $6.50 per pound, 100% ground beef (Sep 2026) | **+52.0%** | the South region | bls.gov |
| **Car insurance** | index 846.1 (Sep 2026) | **+49.4%** | the U.S. | bls.gov |
| **Eggs** | $2.37 per dozen, grade A large (Sep 2026) | **+43.3%** | the South region | bls.gov |
| **Gasoline** | $3.73 per gallon, regular unleaded (Sep 2026) | **+35.8%** | Houston | bls.gov |
| **Electricity** | $0.16 per kilowatt-hour (Sep 2026) | **+25.4%** | the South region | bls.gov |
| **Rent** | index 328.7 (Sep 2026) | **+20.8%** | Houston | bls.gov |
| **Milk** | $3.90 per gallon, whole (Sep 2026) | **+10.3%** | the South region | bls.gov |
| **Prescription drugs** | index 543.6 (Sep 2026) | **+4.2%** | the U.S. | bls.gov |

## Against the nation

- Rose faster here than in the U.S. city average: eggs +43.3% in the South region against +23.8% nationally; ground beef +52.0% in the South region against +50.8% nationally. BLS CPI
- Rose slower here than nationally: electricity +25.4% in the South region against +36.1% nationally; rent +20.8% in Houston against +28.2% nationally; milk +10.3% in the South region against +14.5% nationally; gasoline +35.8% in Houston against +37.3% nationally. BLS CPI

## Who lobbies on these goods

**Pharmaceutical and health care industries** (Prescription drugs): **369 lobbying contracts**, 1,372 reports in 2025. Led by Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (19 contracts) network, Eli Lilly and Company (9 contracts) network, Phrma (10 contracts) network.

**Food and agricultural industries** (Eggs, Milk, Ground beef): **215 lobbying contracts**, 792 reports in 2025. Led by National Confectioners Association (8 contracts), American Beverage Association (6 contracts), National Pork Producers Council (6 contracts).

**Fuel and oil and energy industries** (Gasoline): **199 lobbying contracts**, 692 reports in 2025. Led by Edison Electric Institute (9 contracts) network, Nextera Energy, Inc. (9 contracts) network, Southern Company (7 contracts) network.

**Energy and utility industries** (Electricity): **189 lobbying contracts**, 642 reports in 2025. Led by Edison Electric Institute (9 contracts) network, Nextera Energy, Inc. (9 contracts) network, Southern Company (7 contracts) network.

**Insurance industry** (Car insurance): **49 lobbying contracts**, 207 reports in 2025. Led by American Property Casualty Insurance Association (5 contracts) network, National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (5 contracts), Liberty Mutual Group (4 contracts) network.

**Housing and real estate industries** (Rent): **38 lobbying contracts**, 132 reports in 2025. Led by Mortgage Bankers Association (6 contracts) network, National Association of Realtors (5 contracts) network, National Association of Home Builders (4 contracts) network.

WHAT IT LANDS ON

## Money in your district

PACs for the industries behind this basket gave $61,000 to TX-29's House candidates and $110,000 to Texas's Senate candidates.

- House, TX-29: **$61,000** across 6 tracked gifts.
- ExxonMobil PAC gave **$22,500** to Sylvia Garcia for Congress (D), 2026 cycle; lobbies on fuel and oil, energy. QPQ Tracker
- Valero Energy Corporation Political Action Committee gave **$16,000** to Sylvia Garcia for Congress (D), 2026 cycle; lobbies on fuel and oil, energy. QPQ Tracker
- Phillips 66 PAC gave **$10,000** to Sylvia Garcia for Congress (D), 2026 cycle; lobbies on fuel and oil, energy. QPQ Tracker
- American Petroleum Institute PAC gave **$7,000** to Sylvia Garcia for Congress (D), 2026 cycle; lobbies on fuel and oil, energy, utility. QPQ Tracker
- Mortgage Bankers Association PAC (morpac) gave **$3,500** to Sylvia Garcia for Congress (D), 2026 cycle; lobbies on housing, real estate. QPQ Tracker
- Senate, Texas: **$110,000** across 11 tracked gifts.
- ExxonMobil PAC gave **$30,000** to Ted Cruz for Senate (R), 2026 cycle; lobbies on fuel and oil, energy. QPQ Tracker
- ExxonMobil PAC gave **$15,000** to Texans for Senator John Cornyn Inc. (R), 2026 cycle; lobbies on fuel and oil, energy. QPQ Tracker
- Gilead Sciences Inc Healthcare Policy PAC gave **$10,000** to Texans for Senator John Cornyn Inc. (R), 2026 cycle; lobbies on pharmaceutical, health care. QPQ Tracker
- Valero Energy Corporation Political Action Committee gave **$10,000** to Republican Party of Texas (R), 2026 cycle; lobbies on fuel and oil, energy. QPQ Tracker
- Valero Energy Corporation Political Action Committee gave **$10,000** to Cornyn Majority Committee (R), 2024 cycle; lobbies on fuel and oil, energy. QPQ Tracker

## Energy bills

- CenterPoint Energy delivers power in Harris County; retail prices are set by competitive providers, and the Texas residential average was 15.9¢ per kWh in Aug 2026; Texas statewide residential rate **+33.2%** from Aug 2021 to Aug 2026. EIA
- Gasoline $3.73 per gallon, regular, gasoline for the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land metro area, Sep 2026; +35.8% over 5 years. BLS

## Data centers

- 4 data centers within 25 miles (3 operating, 1 expanding); **1 proposed, permitted or expanding**. Nearest: CyrusOne LLC - Houston West III Data Center, 10.1 miles. FracTracker

## Schools

- HOUSTON IND SCH DIST 912 spent $13,950 per pupil in FY2024, up 68.2% from $8,295 in FY2013, while all-items prices for the Houston metro area rose 31.9% over the same fiscal years (Jun 2013 to Jun 2024). Spending outpaced local prices. Census F-33

> **WalletShock shows lobbying activity alongside price changes. It does not assert that one caused the other.**

## Sources


U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index and Average Price Data (not seasonally adjusted). https://www.bls.gov/cpi/

U.S. Energy Information Administration, retail electricity sales, Form EIA-861 and weekly retail gasoline prices. https://www.eia.gov/electricity/data/eia861/

U.S. Senate Office of Public Records, Lobbying Disclosure Act filings for 2025, fetched 2026-11-01. https://lda.gov/

QPQ Tracker (purchasingpolicy.org) entity connections, fetched 2026-11-01, joined to FEC committee and candidate master files. https://www.purchasing-policy.org

Data provided by FracTracker Alliance (2026). Accessed via https://www.fractracker.org/data-centers/. https://www.fractracker.org/data-centers/

U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Survey of School System Finances, as reported and not adjusted for inflation. https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/school-finances.html