

Weekly Market Commentary



Flying Blind? Not Exactly. Six Charts That Tell The Story.

By Michael Crook, CAIA, Chief Investment Officer

We're now one month into what appears likely to be the longest US government shutdown in history. One casualty of the shutdown: economic data. Aside from October's Consumer Price Index, which was released as a special exemption to allow the Social Security Administration to calculate the 2026 cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA), federal agencies haven't been able to publish their normal calendar of economic data.

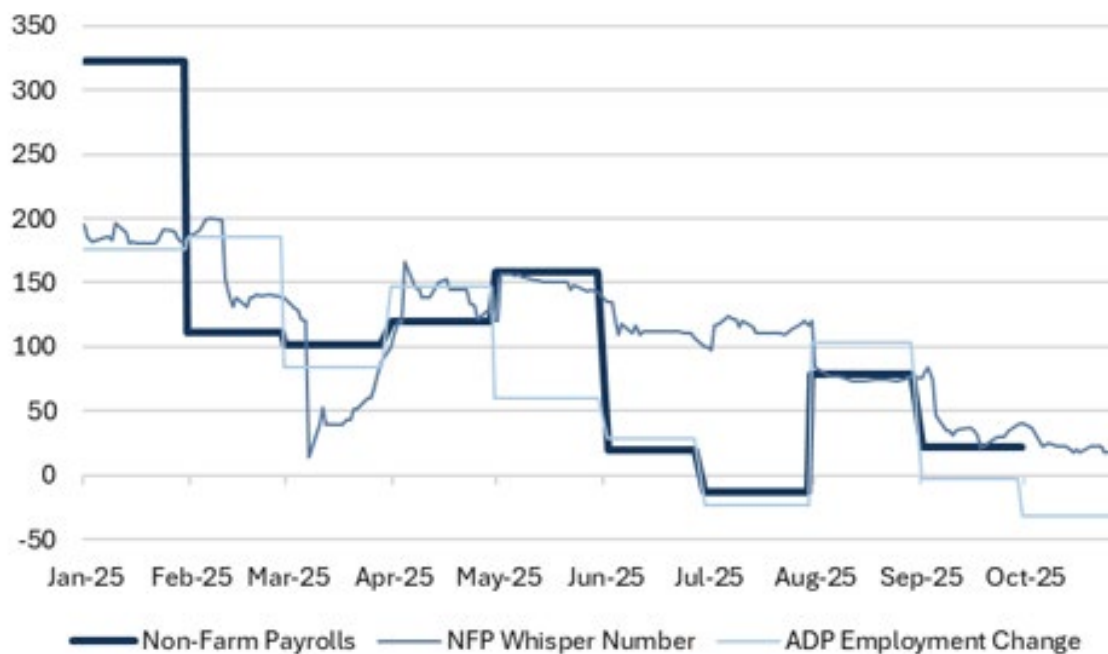
Fortunately, there's reasonable amount of private economic data that we can use as a proxy for the official data. Currently, private economic data indicates:

- Hiring continues to slow (Fig. 1),
- The unemployment rate is likely 4.3-4.4% (Fig. 2),
- Inflation is around 3% year-over-year (Fig. 3),
- Retail sales remain strong at 4-5% growth (Fig. 4),
- Overall GDP growth is trending at 4% for the 4th quarter (Fig. 5), and
- Survey and market-based measures of recession probability haven't changed during the shutdown (Fig. 6).

Why it matters

The current shutdown came at an already-confusing time for the US economy, but the private data tells us that not much changed over the course of October. Job growth has stalled, inflation remains elevated, and a combination of consumer resilience and AI investment is keeping GDP growth well-above trend. These factors, at least in the near term, remain supportive for equity and credit.

Fig. 1: Payroll growth continues to slow



Source: Bloomberg, Mill Creek. As of Oct 27, 2025.

Fig. 2: Unemployment remains near 4.3%



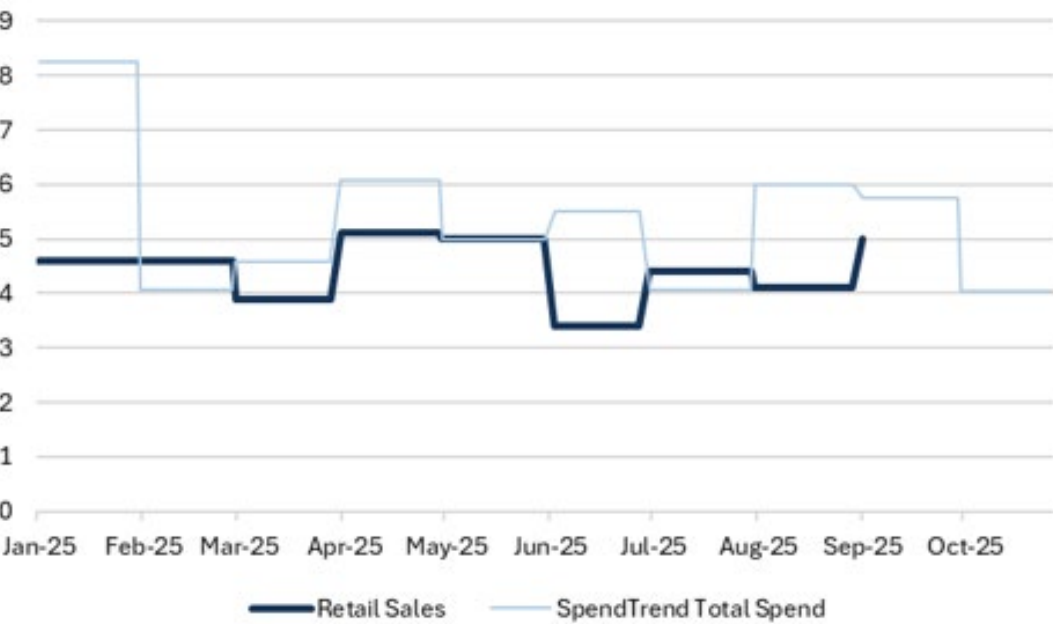
Source: Bloomberg, Mill Creek. As of Oct 27, 2025.

Fig. 3: Inflation remains near 3%



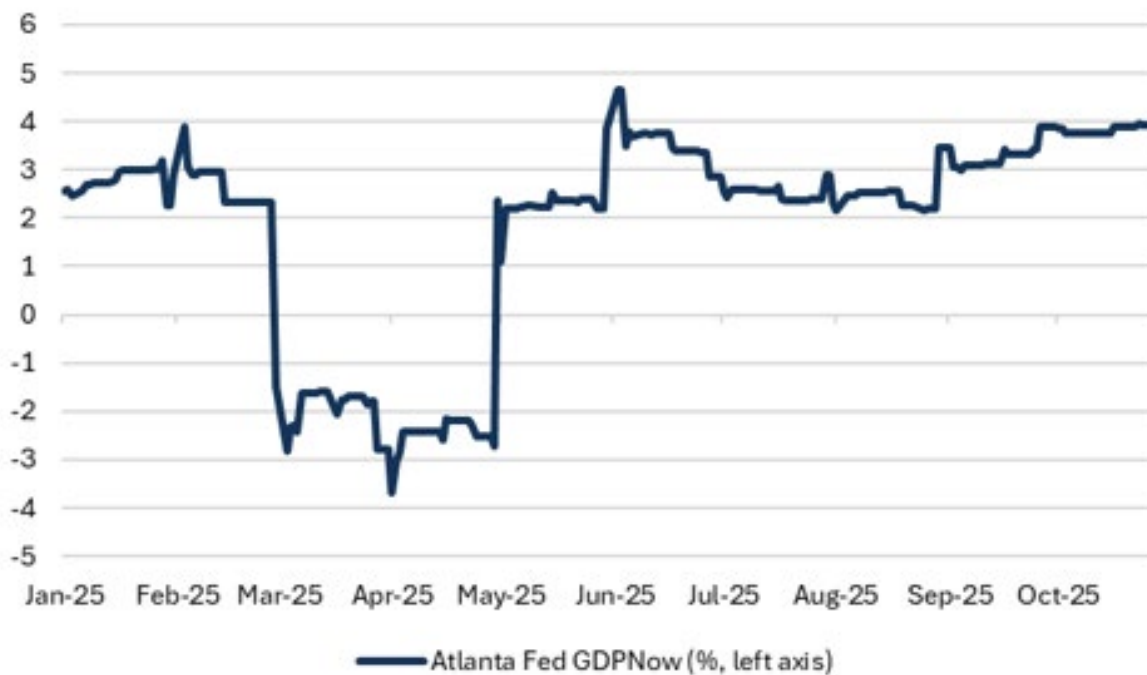
Source: Bloomberg, Mill Creek. As of Oct 27, 2025.

Fig. 4: Retail sales continue to grow at around 5%



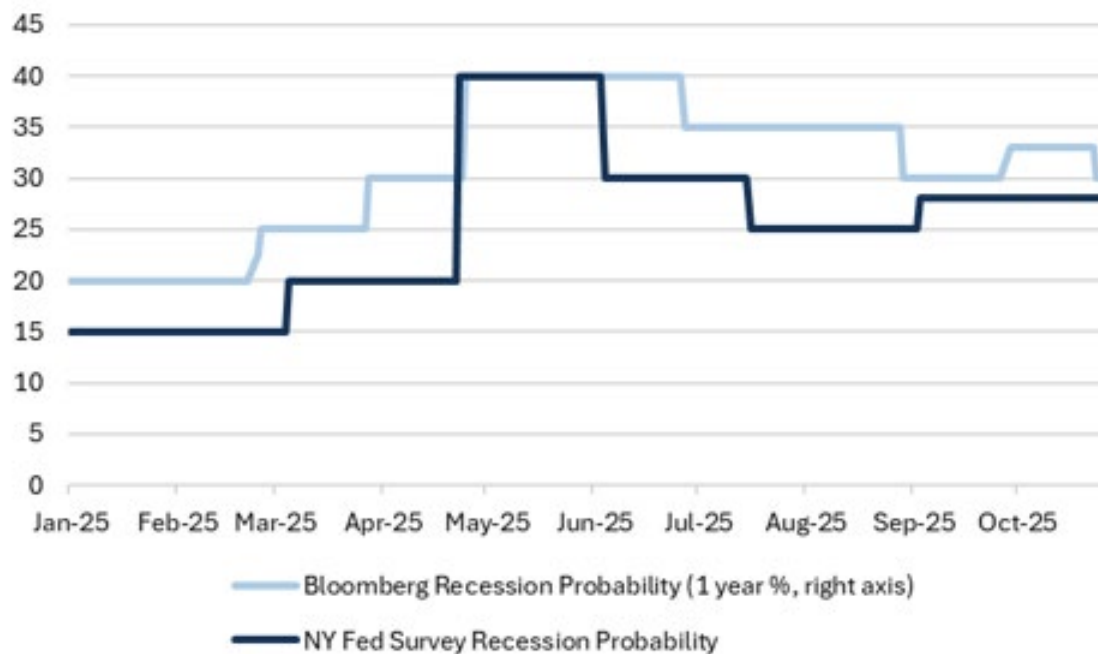
Source: Bloomberg, Mill Creek. As of Oct 27, 2025.

Fig. 5: GDP growth appears strong at nearly 4%



Source: Bloomberg, Mill Creek. As of Oct 27, 2025.

Fig. 6: The probability of a recession hasn't changed during the shutdown



Source: Bloomberg, Mill Creek. As of Oct 27, 2025.

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