Economic & Market Commentary

Entering 2025, estimated earnings growth of companies within the S&P 500 stood at +14.8%. As new tariff and trade policies were unfolding during the first quarter, growth estimates for both earnings and the U.S. economy moved sharply lower. The lack of modernera historical data and precedent surrounding tariffs created significant levels of uncertainty and investor angst. Estimates of the likelihood of an economic recession increased to 50%-60% and 2025 earnings growth plummeted +8.9% in May, a 40% decline from the beginning of the year. Shortly thereafter, economic data started to trickle in each month that showed tariff policies were having lower-than-expected economic impact. Estimates reversed course and started to slowly improve for both the economy and earnings growth. As stated in the Weekly numerous times over the years, there is a very high correlation (98%) between earnings growth and market advances/declines. S&P 500 earnings estimates have rebounded nicely from the May low and currently stand at +11.0%. Calendar year 2026 estimates stand at +13.9%. Earnings season for the third quarter (3Q25) kicked off last week with many bank and financial companies posting better-than-expected results including Morgan Stanley, Bank of America, JP Morgan, Travelers, Goldman Sachs and Wells Fargo. 3Q25 earnings are forecasted to grow +8.5%. The U.S. economy performed better than expected in 2Q2025 growing at a +3.8% annualized pace. The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's GDPNow estimates growth of +3.9% for the third quarter driven higher by growing exports, resilient consumer spending (which accounts for two-thirds' of the U.S. economy), and robust business investment. Growth improvement is tempered by a slowing labor market which the Federal Reserve has indicated is a growing risk as both the supply and demand for labor has declined, which they noted is unusual in an expanding economy.

