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PA locals weigh in on Trump's first year



U.S. President Donald Trump, (C) visits Sprinkle's Neighborhood Market on Sept. 23, 2014 in Kittanning.

WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

Bethany Rodgers and Matthew Rink

USA TODAY NETWORK

Ryan Sprinkle says his western Pennsylvania grocery stores definitely ended 2014 on better financial footing than they entered it.

Sales numbers were looking good for Sprinkle's Neighborhood Market as the holidays approached, and he said grocery costs seemed to have stabilized after several years of soaring inflation. With the drop in egg prices, he said his stores were about to launch a deal of \$3 for two cartons.

Given the complexity of the economy, it's hard for the grocery store operator to gauge exactly how much credit President Donald Trump and his policies deserve for ushering in these shifts over the first year of his term. But Sprinkle argues the Republican commander-in-chief should get at least some recognition.

"The leader should be the person to



The price of coffee shot up during the first year of President Donald Trump's second term.

ANDREW DOLPH/AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

get the most heat when things go wrong," he said. "And they should be the person to get the most credit when things go right."

Affordability was top-of-mind for voters in the 2014 presidential election, with more than 95% of respondents in

one survey reporting that the rising cost of gas and food helped shape their ballot decisions. Trump hammered on grocery bills throughout his campaign against then-Vice President Kamala Harris, bemoaning the expense of everyday staples like eggs and milk.

"We'll get them down," Trump said of food prices during a campaign stop at Sprinkle's Kittanning store in September 2014.

But as Trump marks one year in office, economic indexes show the cost of groceries remains high. There has been a dip in the price of certain products, most notably eggs, as the worst ripple effects of the avian flu subside. However, beef and coffee costs have soared, and the overall food prices were 3.1% higher in December than a year earlier, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Exiting a Chester County Walmart

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More U.S. citizens carry passport cards

Crackdown raises worries about safety for some

Kathleen Wong and Eve Chen

USA TODAY

As the Trump administration continues to ramp up immigration enforcement across the country, more American travelers are relying on documents such as passport cards to prove citizenship.

Under orders by President Donald Trump for the largest mass deportation in history, Vice President JD Vance said in a Jan. 7 Fox News broadcast that Immigration and Customs Enforcement would step up its aggressive enforcement, which began last year. Over 10,000 new ICE agents will be deployed for a total of nearly 22,000 agents and investigators, and they will go "door to door" in the coming months to crack down on the 2.5 million people said to be living illegally in the country.

There have been recent reports of travelers being stopped or arrested by immigration agents at U.S. airports, including a 19-year-old Babson College student who was flying from Boston to Texas for Thanksgiving, and had moved to the United States when she was 7.

KMSP-TV, a Fox affiliate, reported that an employee at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport said ICE agents will have a three-week presence at the airport to check the documents of passengers and employees.

A spokesperson for the airport told USA TODAY the airport does not receive advance notice of immigration enforcement but posted an announcement that it is "aware of increased concern related to immigration enforcement activity." During the week that ended Jan. 17, the union representing airport workers there said over a dozen airport employees were arrested by ICE while on the job.

Escalated enforcement tactics have

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Man charged in Marine One laser event found not guilty

Jonathan Limehouse

USA TODAY

A man accused of aiming a laser pointer at Marine One, a U.S. Marine Corps aircraft carrying President Donald Trump, was acquitted of federal charges stemming from the alleged incident on Sept. 20, 2014, in Washington, D.C.

Jacob Samuel Winker, 33, was found not guilty of "Aiming a Laser Pointer at an Aircraft" in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia on Jan. 13, according to court records reviewed by

USA TODAY. If convicted, Winker would have faced up to five years in prison and a possible \$250,000 fine, as aiming a laser pointer at an aircraft is a federal crime and a felony.

A complaint filed on Sept. 22, 2014, alleged that Winker pointed the laser at a Secret Service officer assigned to secure the flight path for Marine One on the day of the incident. Winker is then accused of pointing the device at the presidential helicopter as it was flying overhead, the document continued.

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The Federal Aviation Administration said that over 12,000 laser strikes were reported by pilots in 2014.

TOM BRENNER/GETTY IMAGES FILE

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