

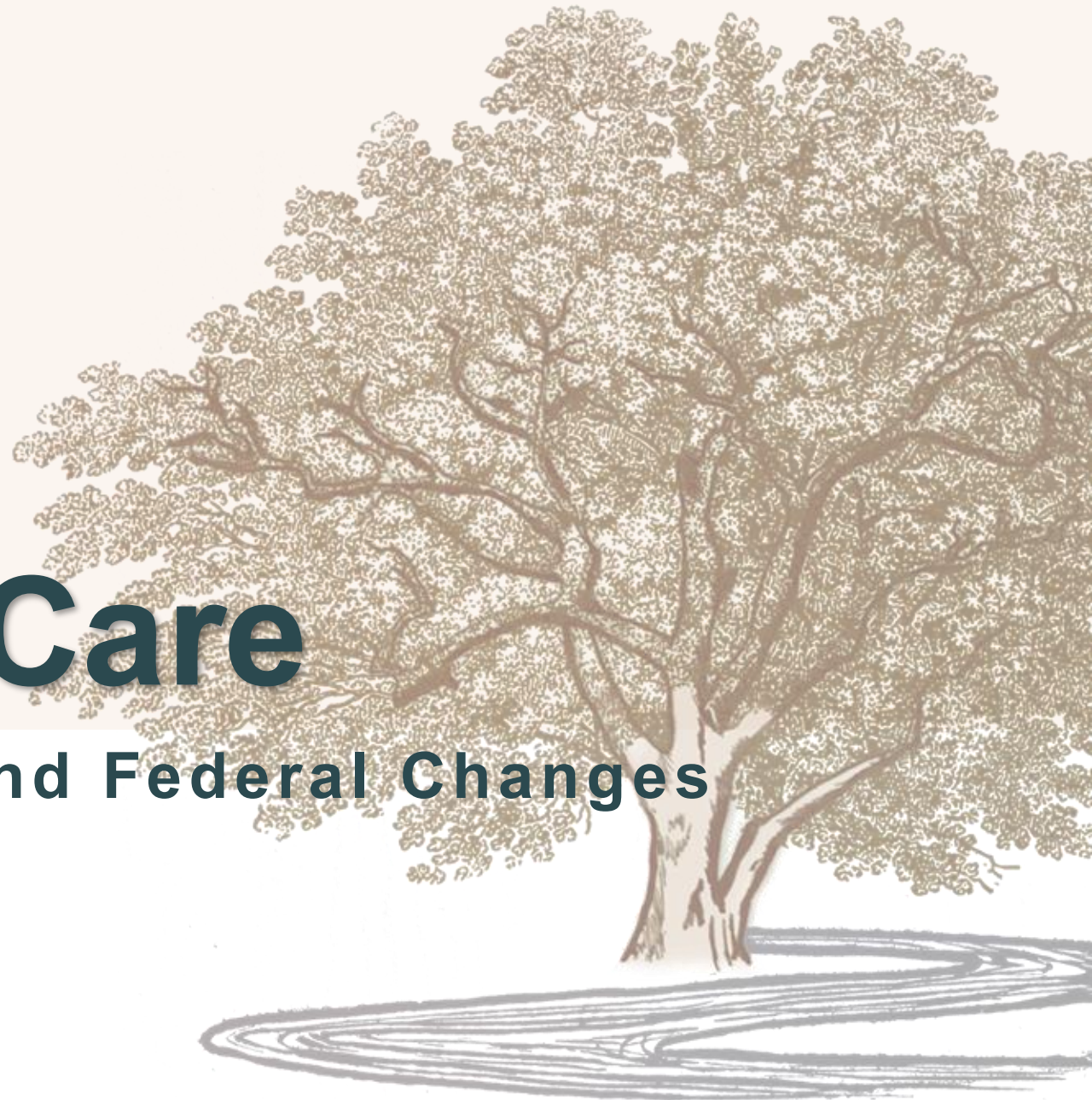
SNAP & TennCare

Tennessee Participation and Federal Changes

May 27, 2026

TISA Review Committee

THE SYCAMORE INSTITUTE



About Sycamore

What do we do?

Impartial, data-driven research
and analysis

Why do we do it?

To equip Tennesseans to identify,
understand, and solve big challenges



Sycamore's Research Areas

**Budget &
Finance**



Health



**Criminal
Justice**



**Economic
Mobility**




Education




**Routine &
Responsive**



Sycamore's Approach



Impartial



Accurate



Accessible

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP Overview

- Joint federal-state program that helps low-income households afford nutritious food and maintain food security.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) sets eligibility and program requirements.
- Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) responsible enrolling, individuals, verifying eligibility, and issuing benefits.
- Eligibility based on **income/assets limits** and **work requirements**
 - Gross income threshold: 130% of federal poverty level
 - Net income threshold: 100% of federal poverty level
 - General and ABAWD work requirements

OBBB Changes to SNAP

Expands recipient work requirements

- Before: able-bodied adults 18-**54** w/out dependent children <**18**
- Now: able-bodies adults 18-**64** w/out dependent children <**14**

Removes eligibility for lawfully-present refugees and asylum seekers

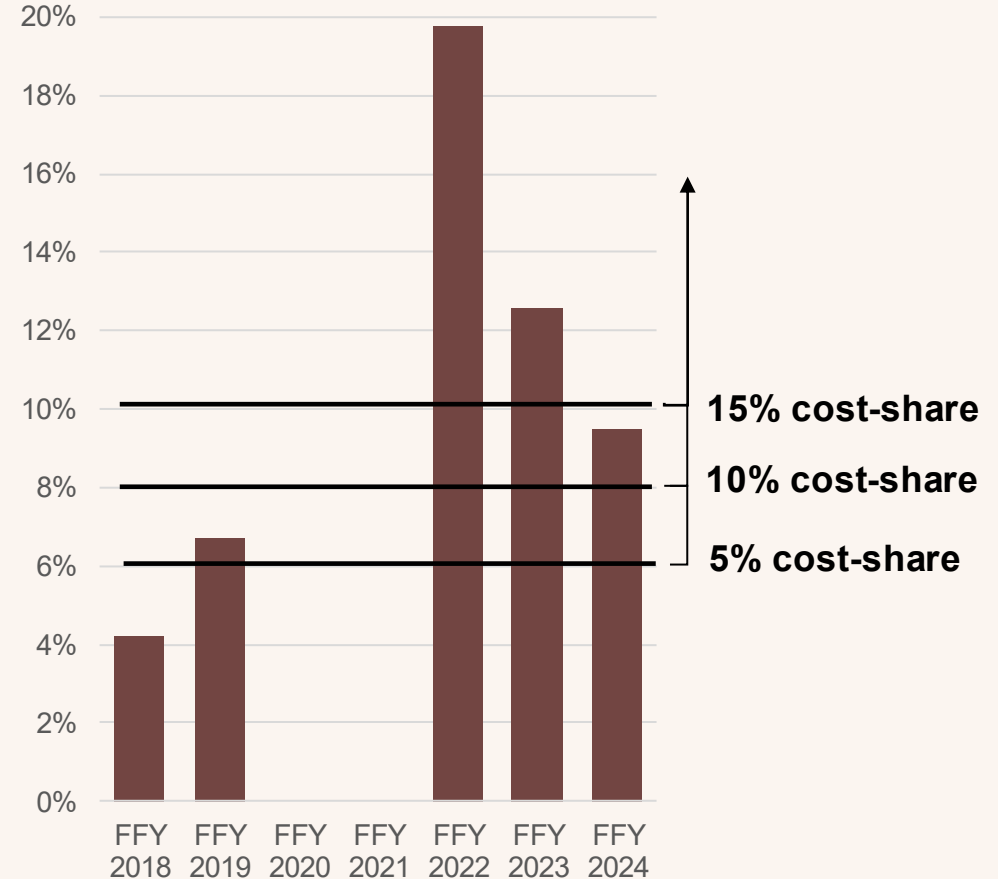
Shifts more costs to states

- Admin cost share: Increases required state share from 50% to 75% in FFY 2027
- Benefits cost share: Up to 15% benefits cost share in FFY 2028 for states with payment error rates >6%

Requires updates to the Thrifty Food Plan to be cost-neutral

- Although benefits will be adjusted for inflation, does not allow for adjustments based on dietary guidelines, the food environment, consumption patterns, etc.

TN's SNAP
Payment Error Rates



Source: [HHS-ACF data](#) as of Aug 2025

Projected SNAP Impact on Tennessee

Work Requirements

- **~52,000 recipients** may need to meet additional work requirements to keep their benefits.

Administrative Cost Share

- \$60M in FY 2027 budget to cover partial-year impact of increased cost share.
- Full ongoing annual cost is \$77M.

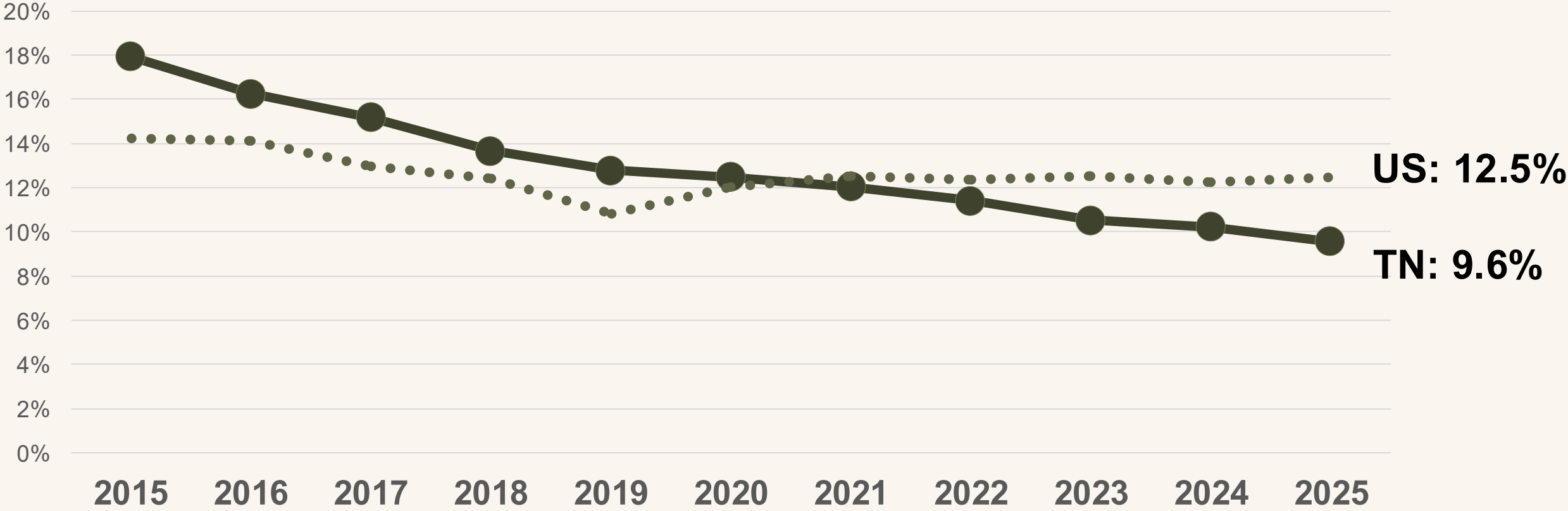
Benefits Cost Share

Payment Error Rate	OBBB Cost Share Percentage Requirement	Potential Tennessee Cost in FFY 2028 (assuming benefits issued are the same as FFY 2024)
<6%	0%	\$0
6-8%	5%	\$81 million
8-10%	10%	\$162 million
>10%	15%	\$243 million

Sources: [USDA](#); [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#); [Tennessee FY 2027 Proposed Budget](#); [The Sycamore Institute Analysis of SNAP Benefits Cost](#)

Tennessee Participation in SNAP has Declined Over the Past Decade

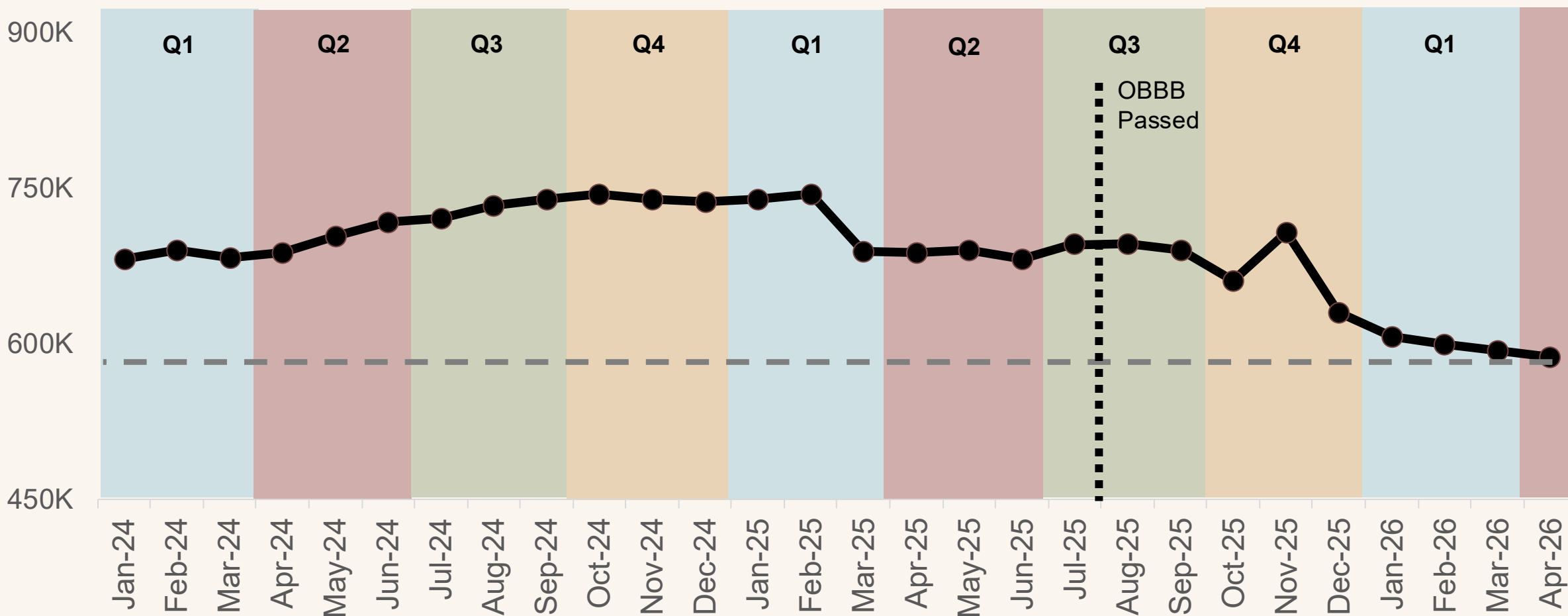
Percentage of Population Participating in SNAP (2015-2025)



Source: Tennessee Department of Human Services, September SNAP Enrollment Reports 2015-2025; U.S. Department of Agriculture SNAP Monthly Participation and Benefit Summary Reports FFY 2015- FFY 2025); U.S. Census Bureau National Intercensal Population Total 2010-2020 (26); and U.S. Census Bureau National Population Totals 2020-2024

Tennessee's SNAP Enrollment Has Declined in Recent Months

Monthly SNAP Enrollment (Individuals) (Jan 2024 - April 2026)



Source: TN Department of Human Services Monthly SNAP Reports

Medicaid (TennCare)

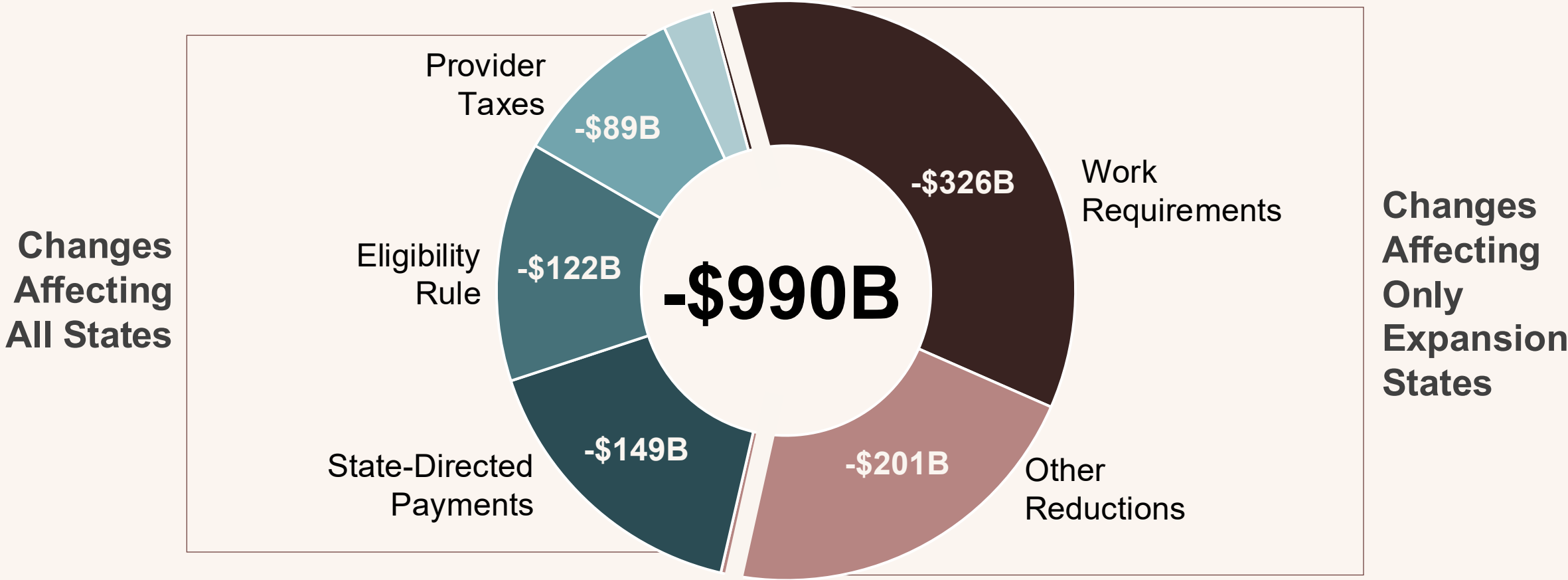
Medicaid (TennCare) Overview

- Federal program to provide health insurance and increased access to care for certain populations.
- Each state runs its own Medicaid program according to federal rules. TennCare is TN's Medicaid program.
- To be eligible in TN, individuals must first meet categorical eligibility (e.g., pregnant, disability), and each category has its own income/asset limits.
- Children 6-19 are eligible for TennCare if their family income is less than **133% of the federal poverty line** (\$43,890 for a family of 4) or for CoverKids if it is less than **250% of poverty**.
- States can implement an optional expansion to any individual earning less than 138% of the federal poverty level (\$45,540 for a family of 4)—regardless of categorical eligibility. TN is not an expansion state.

OBBB Changes to Medicaid (TennCare)

- **Limits Financing Options** - caps and places a moratorium on any new provider taxes
- **Constrains Provider Payments** - caps special state-directed payments to providers
- **Prevents Implementation of Streamlined Enrollment/Renewal** - delayed enforcement of a Biden-era eligibility rule
- **Major Changes for Expansion States** - stricter limits on the above, redeterminations, work requirements, etc.

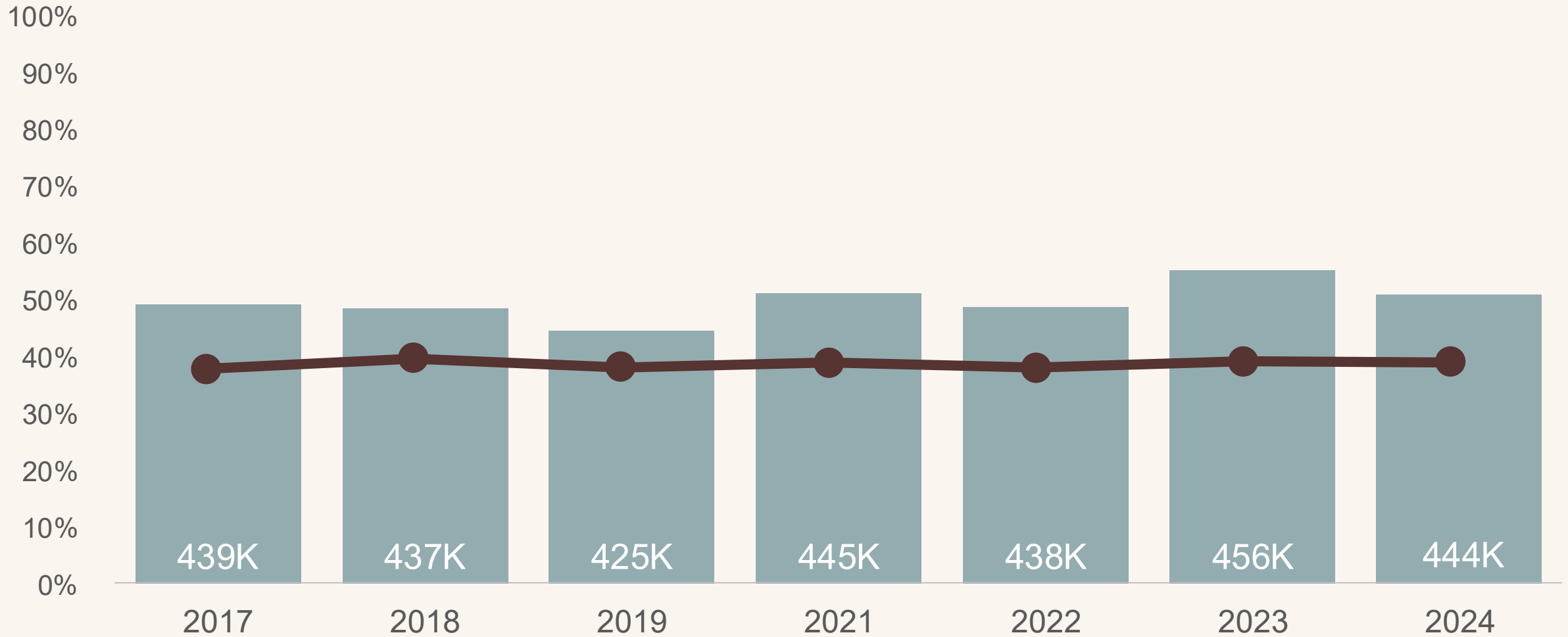
OBBB Changes to Medicaid (TennCare)



Source: [KFF](#) (July 23, 2025)

38% of School-Age Children in Tennessee Receive Medicaid

Number and % of Children Age 6-18 enrolled in Medicaid/Mean-Tested Insurance (TennCare/CoverKids)

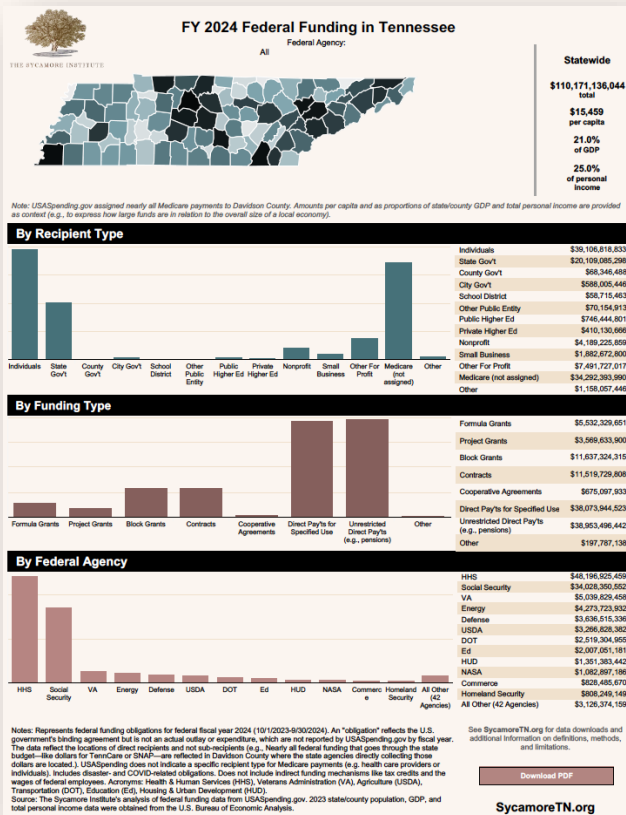


Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2017-2024)

Other Sycamore Resources

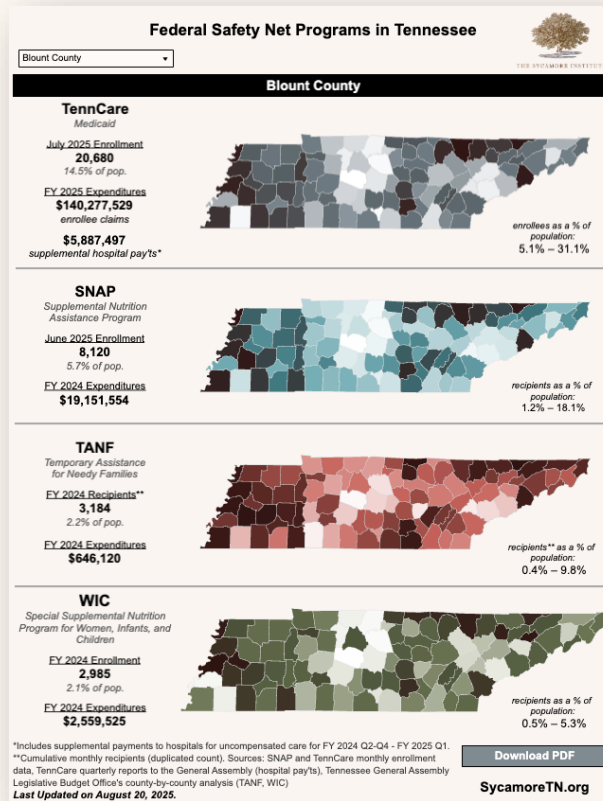
FFY2024 Federal Funding

Explore Federal Obligations by County, Type, and Recipient Category



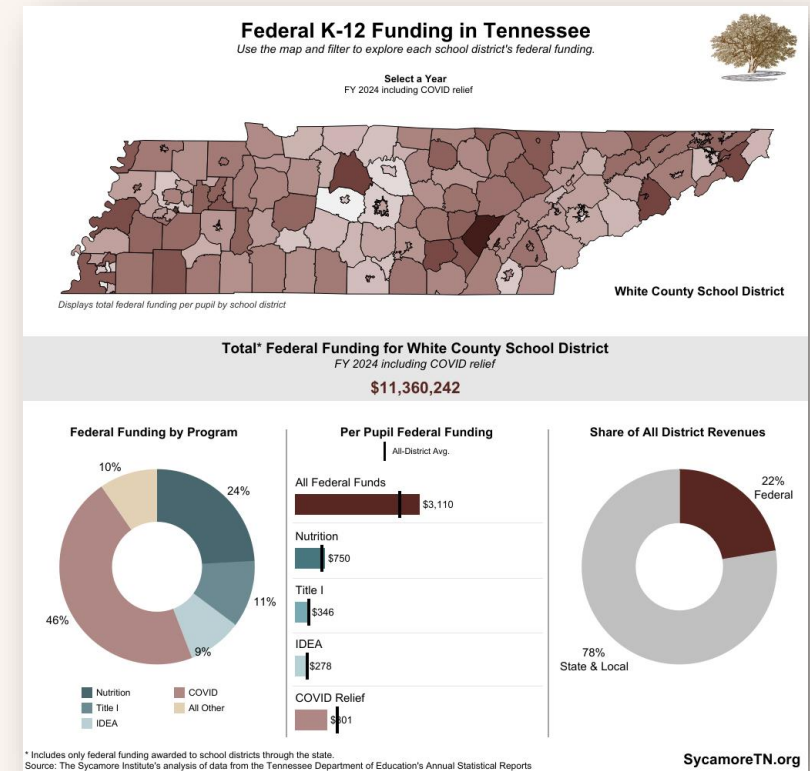
Federal Safety Net Programs

Explore Enrollment & Spending by County



Federal K-12 Funding

Explore by School District





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