



ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT

Ultimately, whatever money the government spends, it gets from taxpayers—whether that money is spent well or spent wastefully. Americans should be able to trust that the government is accountable for how it spends their hard-earned dollars. Unfortunately, that is often not the case. The federal government spends \$4.2 trillion in transfer payments per year, or [\\$33,200](#) per household. With this expansion of government has come widespread waste, fraud, and abuse in federal programs.

Last year, the federal government reported [\\$184 billion](#) in improper payments—enough to pay for eight weeks of gas and groceries for a typical household. That does not include waste, and most fraud goes undetected. The Government Accountability Office estimates that taxpayers lose between [\\$233 billion and \\$521 billion](#) per year to fraud—worth about eight weeks of rent and mortgage payments for the entire country.

The problem isn't simply government mistakes. It's that the people spending taxpayer money face few consequences for not stewarding that money well. While households and businesses suffer financially when they engage in mistaken and wasteful spending, government programs typically receive more money to cover their waste.

Congress must require radical transparency and meaningful accountability in federal transfer programs. The federal government should account for every dollar it spends as thoroughly as the IRS accounts for every dollar it collects. States and entities administering federal programs need skin in the game, bearing financial responsibility when they fail to safeguard taxpayer dollars.

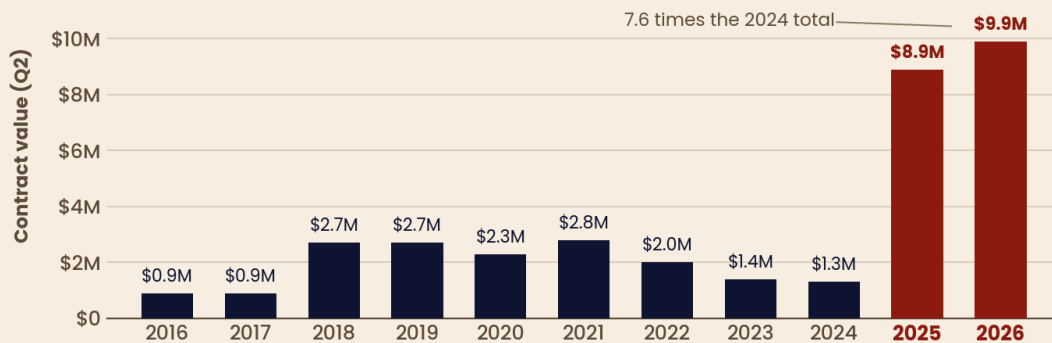
The explosion in federal spending has fueled the fires of waste, fraud, and abuse. Welfare benefits have been extended to middle-class households, loopholes allow wealthy individuals to qualify for welfare, and ineffective and complicated programs often trap individuals rather than help them gain independence. Affordability requires consolidating welfare programs and transitioning much of the welfare state back to state and local governments that are better equipped to truly help those in need.

Waste, fraud, and abuse cost Americans dearly, forcing them to pay more for government while getting less in return, diverting resources from more productive uses, and adding to the taxes and debt that are making life less affordable. Government accountability isn't just about good governance—it is essential to affordability.



Tariff lobbying has grown more than sevenfold in two years

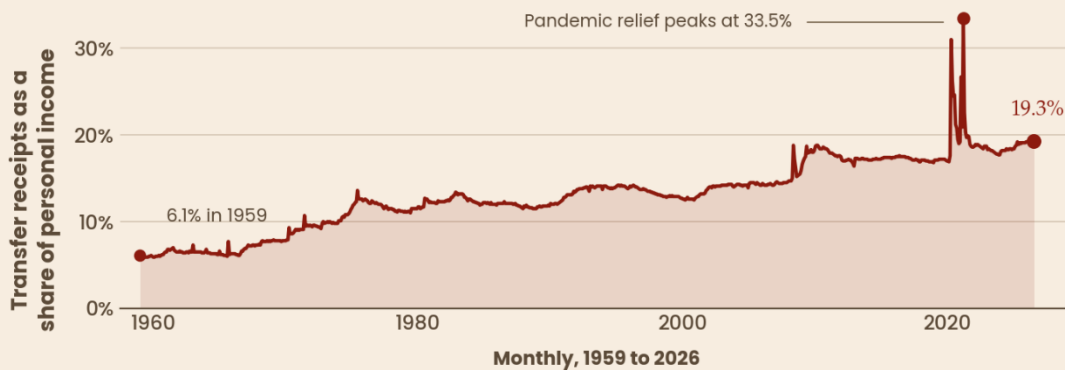
Value of Q2 lobbying contracts that mention tariffs



Source: AAF tabulation of U.S. House of Representatives Clerk lobbying disclosures (disclosurespreview.house.gov), accessed July 22, 2026. Figures are the total value of second-quarter lobbying contracts that list tariffs among their issues; contracts may cover more than just tariffs. Figures are nominal.

Nearly a fifth of personal income comes from government redistribution

Today's 19.3% is the highest share on record outside the pandemic



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Current Transfer Receipts and Personal Income — via FRED. Transfer receipts are predominantly government social benefits: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, unemployment insurance, and veterans' benefits.