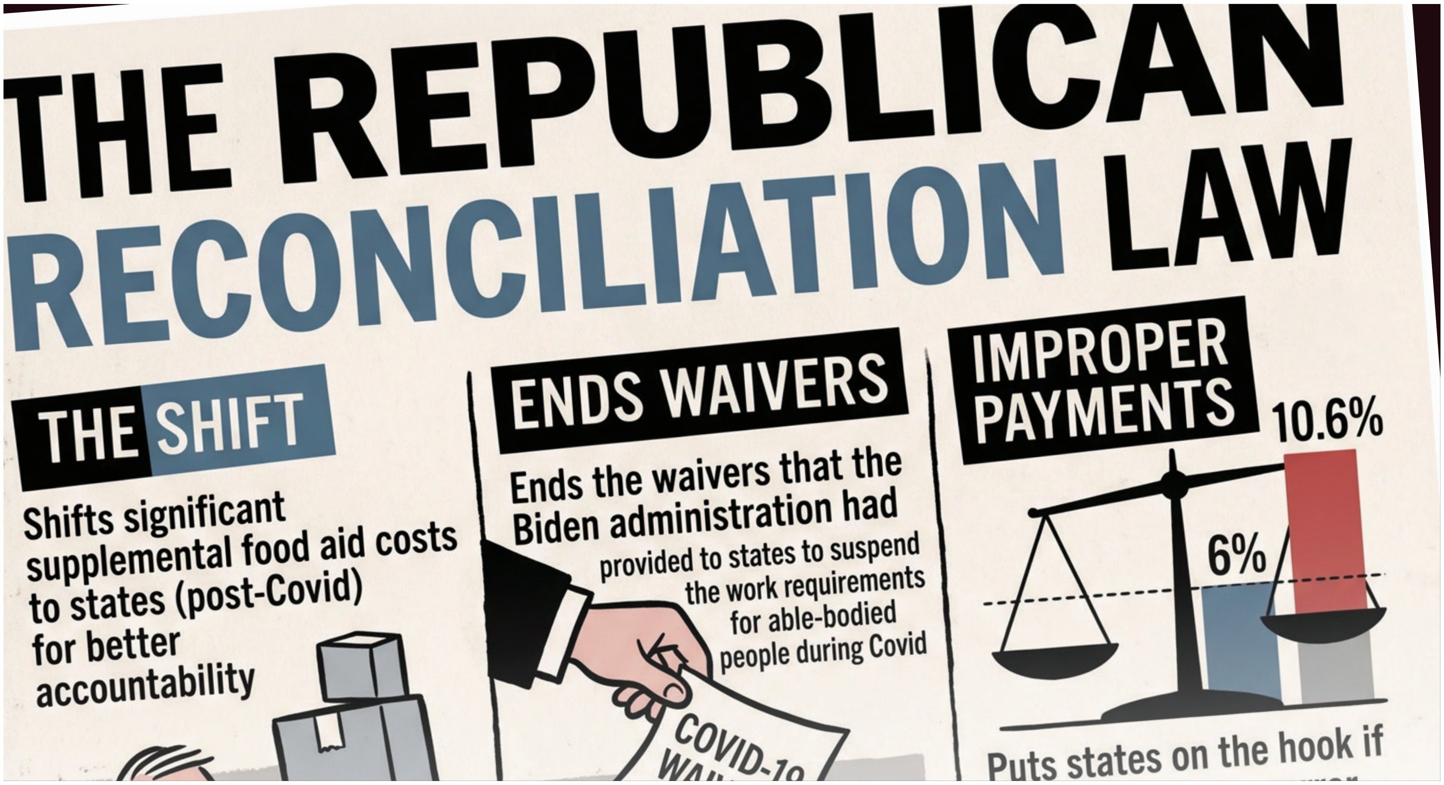

SNAP Accountability

September 8, 2026

"The harmful Republican reconciliation law enacted July 4, 2025, poses great harm to families, including higher food costs, poverty, and hunger. It makes deep cuts to federal funding for food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), *shifting significant new costs to states,*" the progressive Center on Budget and Policy Priorities warned, two weeks ago. "It dramatically expands SNAP's already harsh and ineffective provision taking away people's benefits for not meeting a work requirement."

The Wall Street Journal's Potomac Watch podcast highlighted this shift from a different perspective.

"[O]ne reason why food stamps ballooned during the pandemic and then still didn't decline even as unemployment declined is because states didn't have an incentive to actually police their roles and pare back people who were ineligible . . . because of their incomes or for other reasons," explained Allysia Finley, a member of the *Journal*'s Editorial Board.

"The second component" of the law, Finley continued, "was that it ended or banned these waivers that the Biden administration had provided to states to suspend the work requirements for these able-bodied people.

"Now, the third thing that the bill did was put states on the hook for a share of the benefits if they had improper error payment rates over six percent," Finley elaborated. "Six percent was about the pre-pandemic average, but the improper payment rate actually ballooned again during the pandemic and was about 10.6% as of last year."

"But that's the whole point," offered columnist Kimberley Strassel "because the feds traditionally pay a hundred percent of the benefit costs of SNAP, it's free money. . . ."

The point being, what incentive could states have to police the program's abuse? None. Until "this bill came along. . . ."

*Dis*incentives matter.

A whisper of accountability.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.