

# The Social Safety Net : A Brief History

# 1930s

- ▶ New Deal Programs:
  - ▶ Social Security Act
    - ▶ 1939 Amendments: Added spousal and child benefits
  - ▶ ADC Program (formerly mothers pensions)
  - ▶ UI began

# 1950s

- ▶ Social Security Amendments/expansions
  - ▶ Benefit increases (no COLAs yet)
  - ▶ SSDI in 1956
- ▶ Public Housing Initial Expansion

# 1960s

- ▶ Growth in AFDC
- ▶ “Great Society” programs begin
  - ▶ Food Stamp Act of 1964 began program
  - ▶ Medicare and Medicaid (1965 Social Security Amendments)
  - ▶ Job Corps provided training

# 1970s

- ▶ Medicare expanded to disabled (1972)
- ▶ Food stamps become national program (1974)
- ▶ SSI begins (1974)

# 1980s

- ▶ Contractions:
  - ▶ AFDC (Benefit Reductions)
  - ▶ SSDI (CDR Reagan Reforms)
- ▶ Medicaid expansions

# 1990s

- ▶ 1990: Sullivan vs. Zebley
  - ▶ Child SSI cases soar after
- ▶ 1990: ADA passed, changing nature of “disability”
- ▶ Shift from public housing to housing vouchers
- ▶ 1996 Welfare Reform
  - ▶ AFDC → TANF
    - ▶ Caseloads were rising prior, fell after
  - ▶ Large EITC expansion
  - ▶ SNAP changes
    - ▶ ABAWD restrictions
    - ▶ State administration
    - ▶ EBT switch
- ▶ CHIP and CTC introduced in 1997

## 2000s

- ▶ Medicare Part D (prescription drugs) - 2003
- ▶ CTC doubled in 2003
- ▶ Social security debate: privatizations
  - ▶ Baby boomers begin to retire, live longer
- ▶ TANF nosedive
- ▶ SSDI cases rising
- ▶ 2008: Food Stamp Program → SNAP, EBT



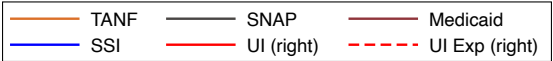
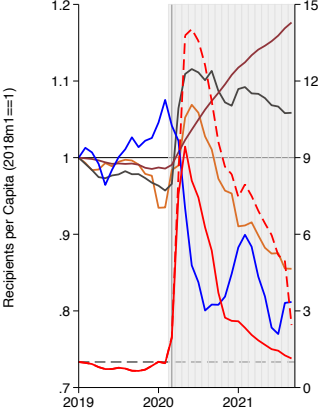
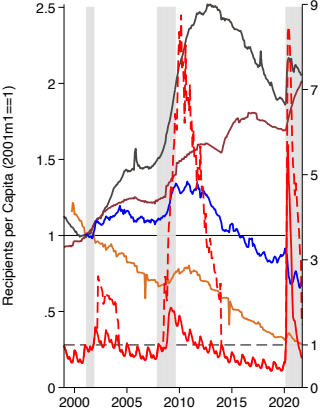
## 2010s

- ▶ Great Recession:
  - ▶ SNAP expansion
  - ▶ UI enhanced benefits
- ▶ Affordable Care Act (passed 2010, in place 2014): Medicaid expansion
- ▶ 2017 TCJA: doubled CTC, partially refundable (\$2,000/child)

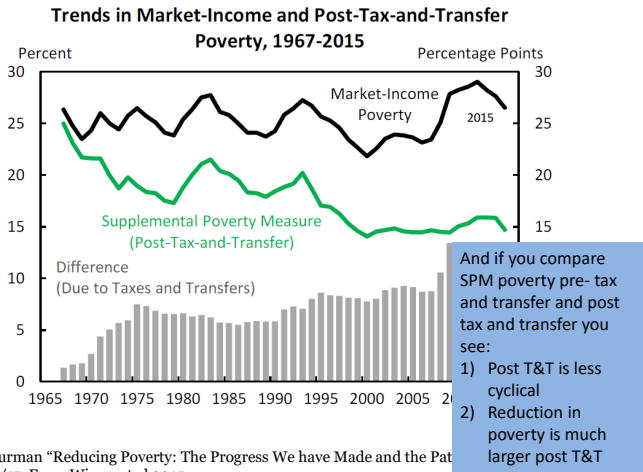
# COVID

- ▶ Dramatic increase in UI
- ▶ SNAP, Medicaid expansions
- ▶ CTC expansion (\$3,000-\$3,500, fully refundable)

# Caseloads During the 2000s



# Poverty Trends



Source: Furman "Reducing Poverty: The Progress We have Made and the Path Forward," CEA, 1/17/17. From Wimer et al 2015.

# Poverty Trends

- ▶ Safety Net Changes Over Time Affects Groups Differently:
  - ▶ Kids vs. Prime-age Adults vs. Elderly
  - ▶ Married vs. Single
  - ▶ Working vs. Non-Working
  - ▶ Disabled vs. Non-Disabled