

ON AIR



# Health Freedom Minute

February 6, 2026

## Is \$28.8 Billion No Big Deal?

Imagine one billion dollars. There are 1000 millions in a billion dollars. Now, try to imagine \$28.8 billion dollars. The Medicare administration estimates \$28.8 billion in improper payments for Original Medicare in 2025 and more than \$23 billion for Medicare Advantage. Most improper payments are overpayments or payments made with insufficient data to support the payment. Medicaid is even worse.

But never mind. The Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019, says federal agencies are in compliance with the law if they've "reported an improper payment rate of less than 10 percent for each program." Medicare was at around 6%. So, no big deal! But of course, it's a very big deal.

**"CMS estimates Medicare made \$28.8B in improper payments in FY2025,"** Paige Minemyer, FierceHealthcare, January 15, 2026:  
[https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/regulatory/cms-estimates-medicare-made-288b-improper-payments-fy2025?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=nl&utm\\_campaign=HC-NL-FierceHealthPayer&oly\\_enc\\_id=7343B2833112J8B](https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/regulatory/cms-estimates-medicare-made-288b-improper-payments-fy2025?utm_medium=email&utm_source=nl&utm_campaign=HC-NL-FierceHealthPayer&oly_enc_id=7343B2833112J8B)

**"Fiscal Year 2025 Improper Payments Fact Sheet,"** CMS press release, January 15, 2026:  
<https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/fiscal-year-2025-improper-payments-fact-sheet>

Presented daily by Twila Brase, President and Co-founder  
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*The Health Freedom Minute is now heard in 48 states:  
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