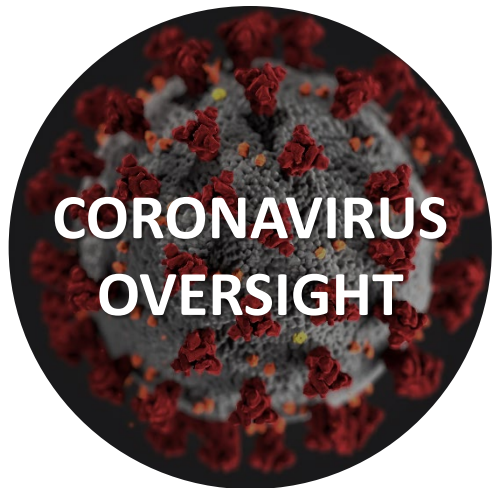# The Future of Accountability: Responding to Major National Challenges

Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General of the
United States

National Intergovernmental
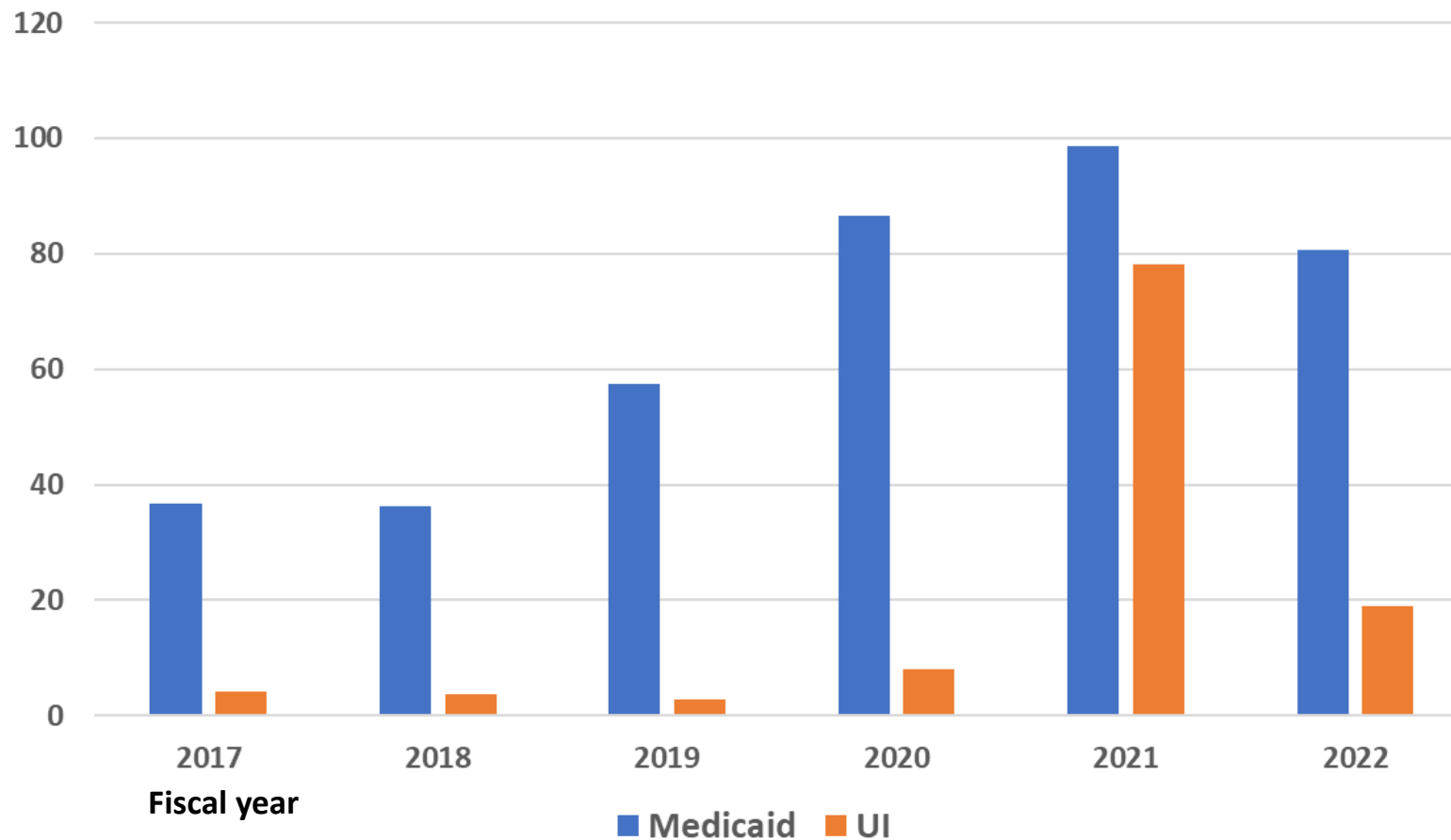Audit Forum
May 16, 2023

CORONAVIRUS OVERSIGHT

HIGH RISK LIST

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

AMERICA'S FISCAL FUTURE

CORONAVIRUS OVERSIGHT

GAO's Fraud Risk Framework

Medicaid & UI Improper Payments, FY 2017-2022

Dollars (in billions)
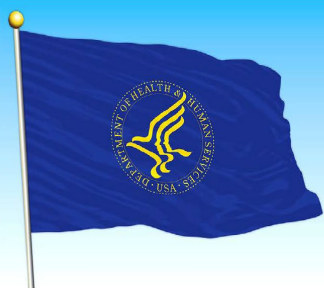

Source: GAO analysis of OMB data

HIGH RISK LIST

High Risk Area Additions

STRENGTHENING MANAGEMENT OF THE FEDERAL PRISON SYSTEM
Source: Photo illustration of a prison facility. Jeffrey Zalesny/stock.adobe.com. | GAO-23-106203

HHS LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES
Source: frizio/stock.adobe.com. | GAO-23-106203

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE SYSTEM
Source: Mr Doomits/stock.adobe.com. | GAO-23-106203

EMERGENCY LOANS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES
Source: wladimir1804/stock.adobe.com. | GAO-23-106203

Areas Removed

PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION INSURANCE PROGRAMS
Source: Brian Jackson/stock.adobe.com. | GAO-23-106203

2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS
Source: U.S. Census Bureau. | GAO-23-106203

High Risk Area: Cybersecurity

Four Major Cybersecurity Challenges

Source: GAO analysis; peshkov/stock.adobe.com; Gorodenkoff/stock.adobe.com; metamorworks/stock.adobe.com; Monster Ztudio/stock.adobe.com. | GAO-21-119SP

High Risk Area: Drug Misuse

Number of Drug Overdoses in the U.S., January 2015 through September 2022

Predicted number of drug overdose deaths (in thousands)
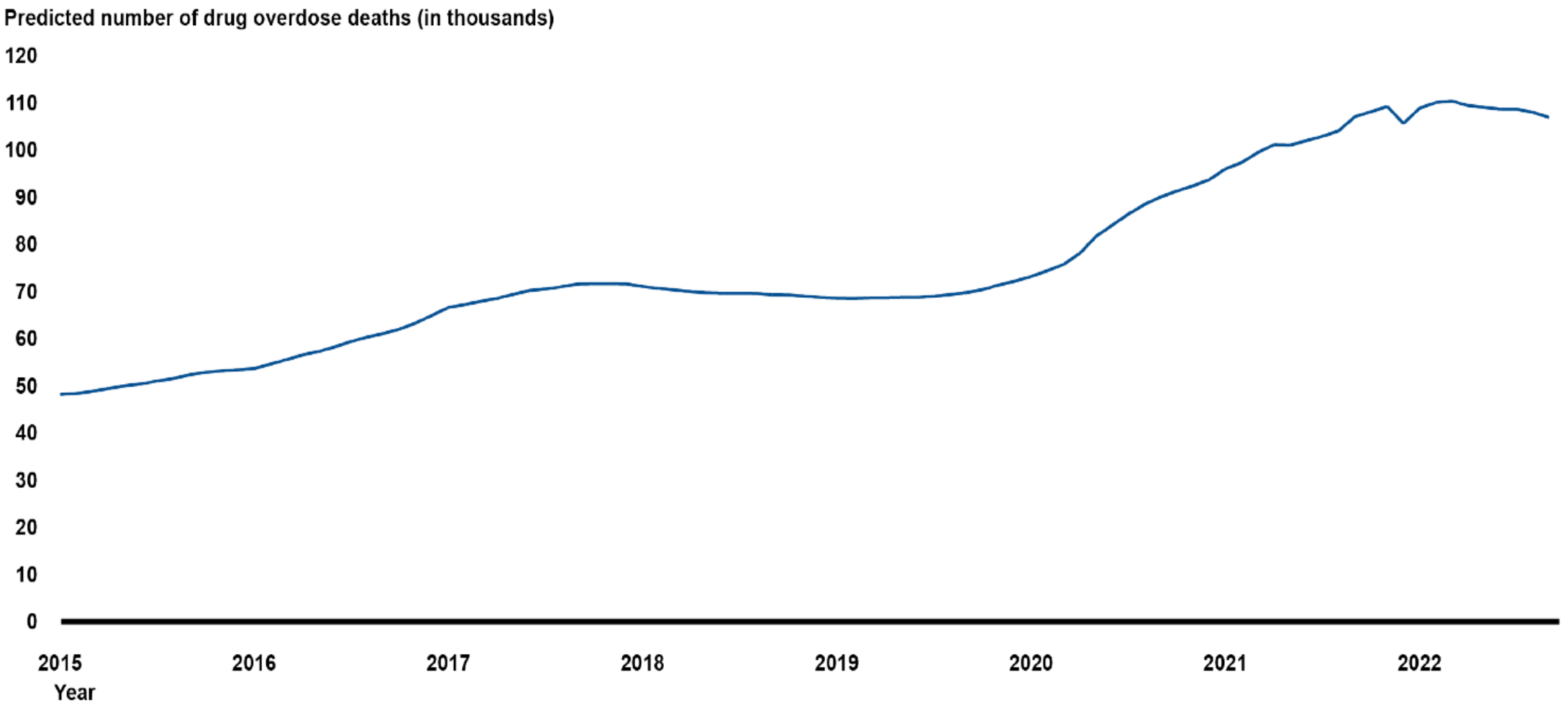
Source: GAO Analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics data. | GAO-23-106203

Note: Provisional death counts are for "12-month ending periods," defined as the number of deaths occurring in the 12-month period ending in the month indicated. Deaths are classified by the reporting jurisdiction in which the death occurred. Provisional drug overdose death counts are based on death records received and processed by the National Center for Health Statistics as of a specified cutoff date. Data in this figure are predicted provisional counts, which represent estimates of the number of deaths adjusted for incomplete reporting. Data for 2015 to 2021 may differ from published reports using final data. Data for 2022 are underreported due to incomplete data.

High Risk List: Other Areas of Focus

Modernizing the U.S. Financial Regulatory System

Enhanced Oversight of Medical Products

Federal Government's Fiscal Exposures to Climate Risks

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Recent S&T Spotlights

- **Data Security in a Post-Quantum World**

- **Synthetic Biology**

- **Brain-Computer Interfaces**

- **Long COVID**

- **Zero Trust Architecture**

- **Counter-Drone Technology**

Image source: Mysterylab/stock.adobe.com

Recent Technology Assessments

- **AI in Health Care: Medical Diagnostics**

- **Quantum Computing**

- **Fusion Energy**

- **Effects of Large Satellite Constellations**

- **Utility-Scale Energy Storage**

- **Persistent Chemicals (PFAS Detection and Treatment)**

- **Carbon Capture**

13

Image source: Oak Ridge National Laboratory

GAO's AI Accountability Framework

Data
Ensure quality, reliability, and representativeness of data sources and processing.

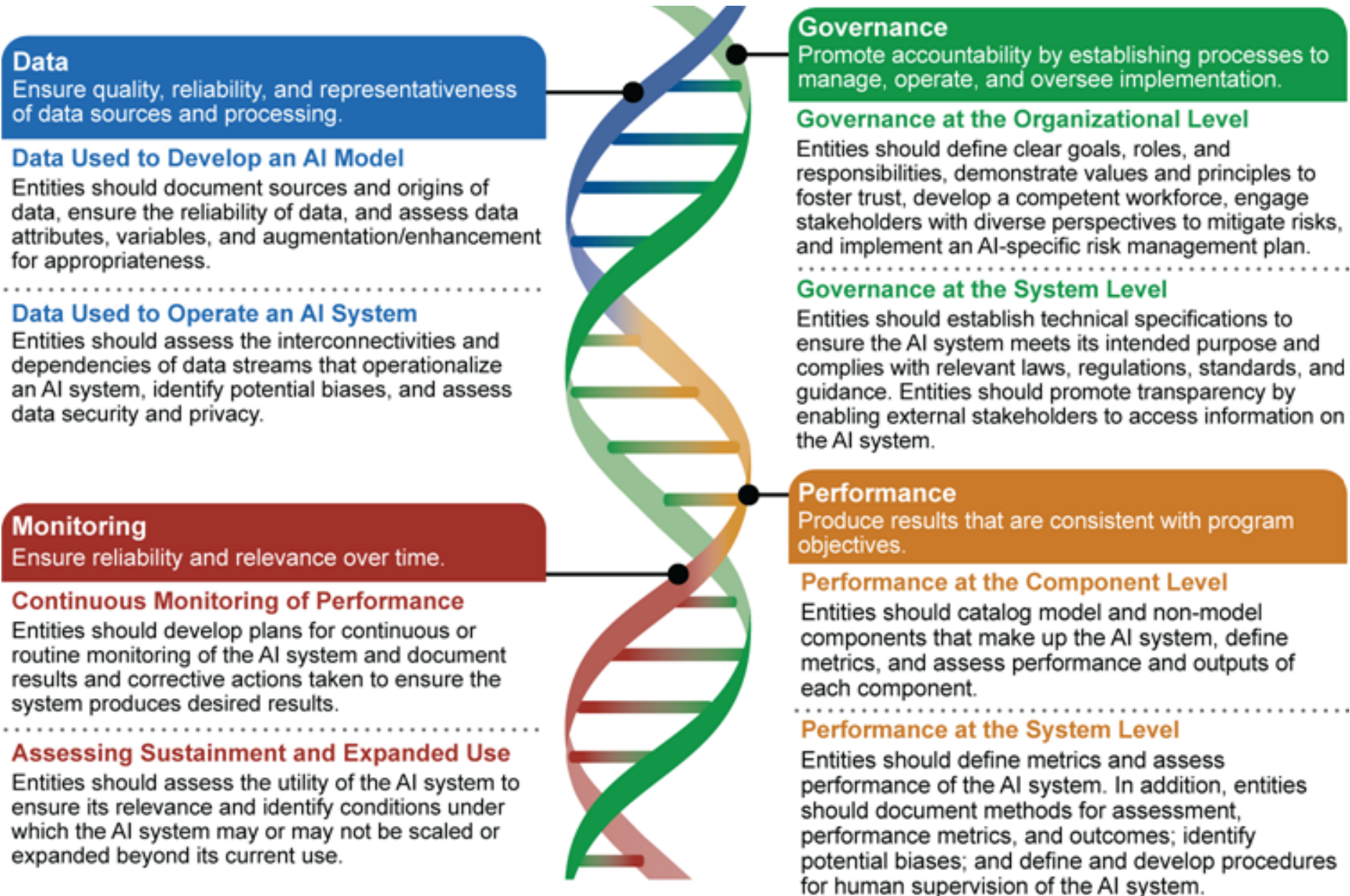**Data Used to Develop an AI Model**
Entities should document sources and origins of data, ensure the reliability of data, and assess data attributes, variables, and augmentation/enhancement for appropriateness.

Data Used to Operate an AI System
Entities should assess the interconnectivities and dependencies of data streams that operationalize an AI system, identify potential biases, and assess data security and privacy.

Monitoring
Ensure reliability and relevance over time.

Continuous Monitoring of Performance
Entities should develop plans for continuous or routine monitoring of the AI system and document results and corrective actions taken to ensure the system produces desired results.

Assessing Sustainment and Expanded Use
Entities should assess the utility of the AI system to ensure its relevance and identify conditions under which the AI system may or may not be scaled or expanded beyond its current use.

Governance
Promote accountability by establishing processes to manage, operate, and oversee implementation.

Governance at the Organizational Level
Entities should define clear goals, roles, and responsibilities, demonstrate values and principles to foster trust, develop a competent workforce, engage stakeholders with diverse perspectives to mitigate risks, and implement an AI-specific risk management plan.

Governance at the System Level
Entities should establish technical specifications to ensure the AI system meets its intended purpose and complies with relevant laws, regulations, standards, and guidance. Entities should promote transparency by enabling external stakeholders to access information on the AI system.

Performance
Produce results that are consistent with program objectives.

Performance at the Component Level
Entities should catalog model and non-model components that make up the AI system, define metrics, and assess performance and outputs of each component.

Performance at the System Level
Entities should define metrics and assess performance of the AI system. In addition, entities should document methods for assessment, performance metrics, and outcomes; identify potential biases; and define and develop procedures for human supervision of the AI system.
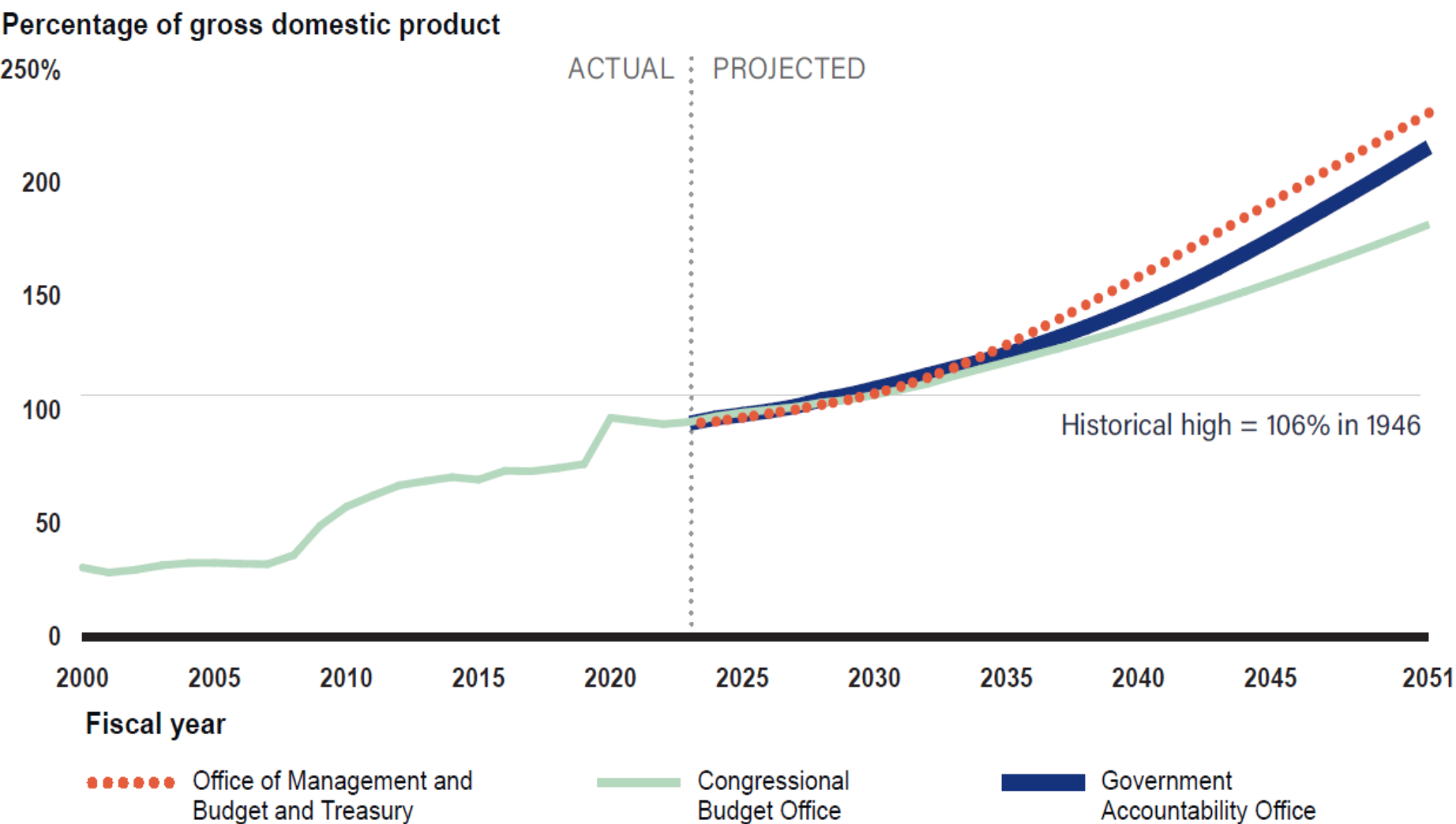
14

AMERICA'S FISCAL FUTURE

Federal Debt Held by the Public as a Share of GDP, 1900-2022

Percentage of gross domestic product
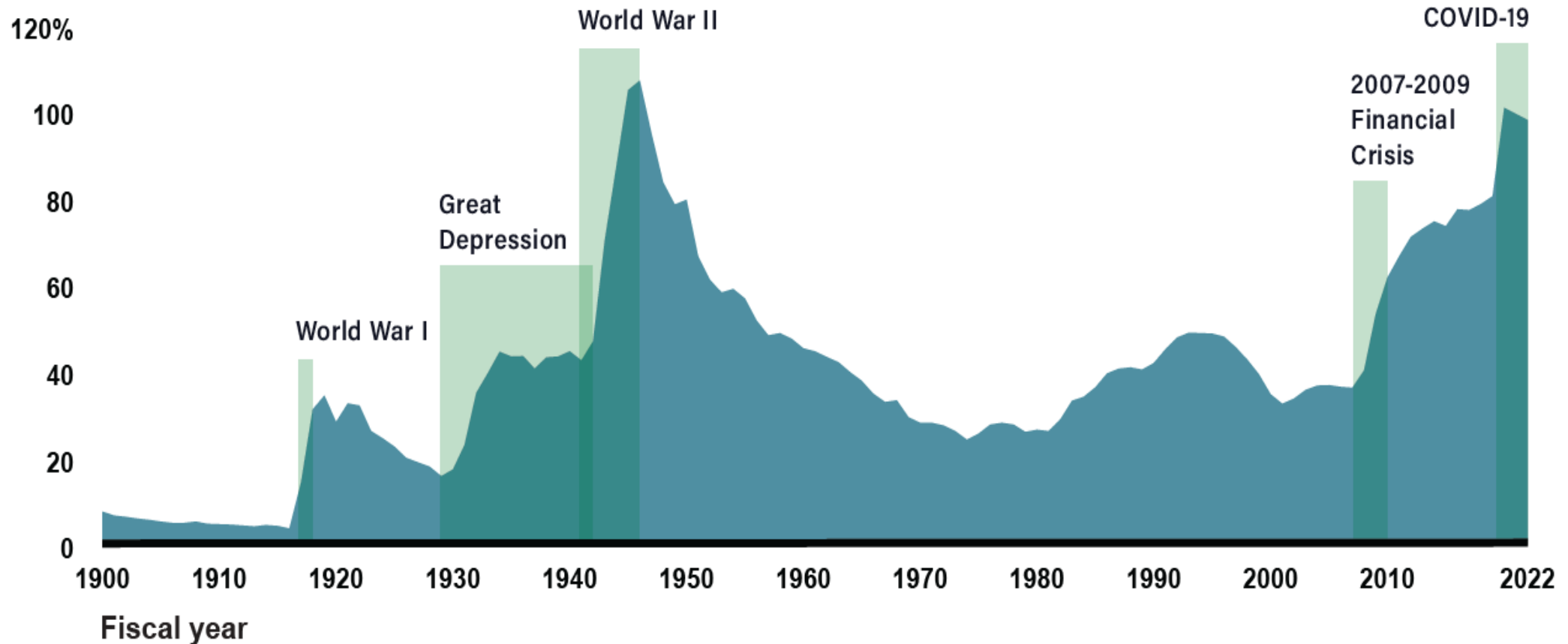
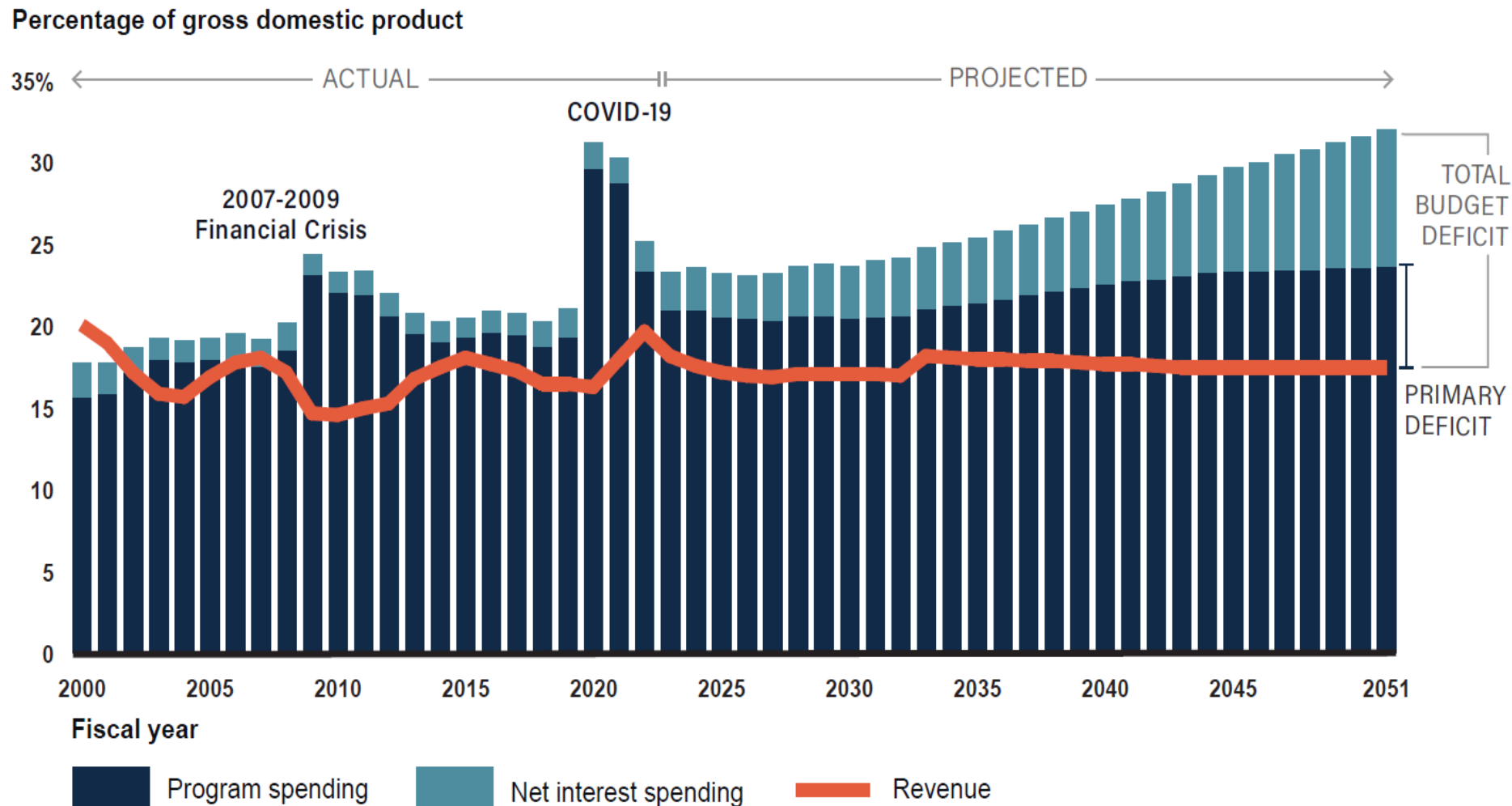Source: Congressional Budget Office data. | GAO-23-106201

Debt Held by the Public as a Share of GDP under Various Policy Simulations

Percentage of gross domestic product

Historical high = 106% in 1946

Fiscal year

Legend:
- ●●●●● Office of Management and Budget and Treasury
- —— Congressional Budget Office
- —— Government Accountability Office

Source: Congressional Budget Office *July 2022* and *February 2023 Outlooks, Fiscal Year 2022 Financial Report of the U.S. Government,* and GAO simulation. | GAO-23-106201

Note: Each of these projections uses different budgetary and economic assumptions to generate the debt-to- GDP ratio in each year. Our simulation incorporates many of CBO's assumptions, with some adjustments to the discretionary spending and mandatory spending assumptions, which explain the divergence in later years. The OMB-Treasury model assumes higher program spending than CBO and GAO and higher interest rate assumptions in the first 20 projection years. These varying assumptions help explain the different outcomes.
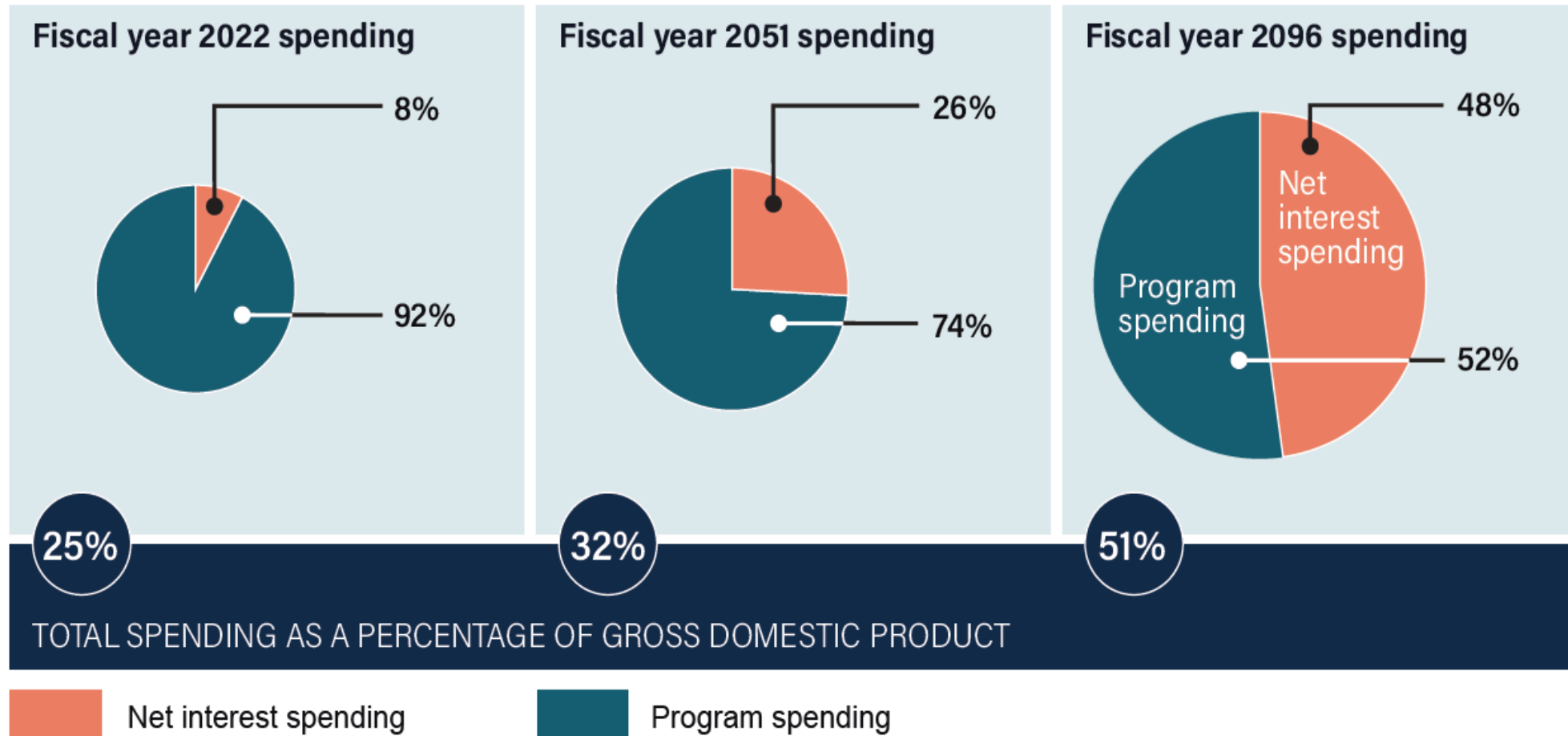
Primary Deficit and Total Budget Deficit, Actual, and Projected

Percentage of gross domestic product

Source: Congressional Budget Office data and GAO simulation. | GAO-23-106201

Note: Starting in 2033 our simulation phases total revenue to a constant at the 50-year historical average as of 2022.
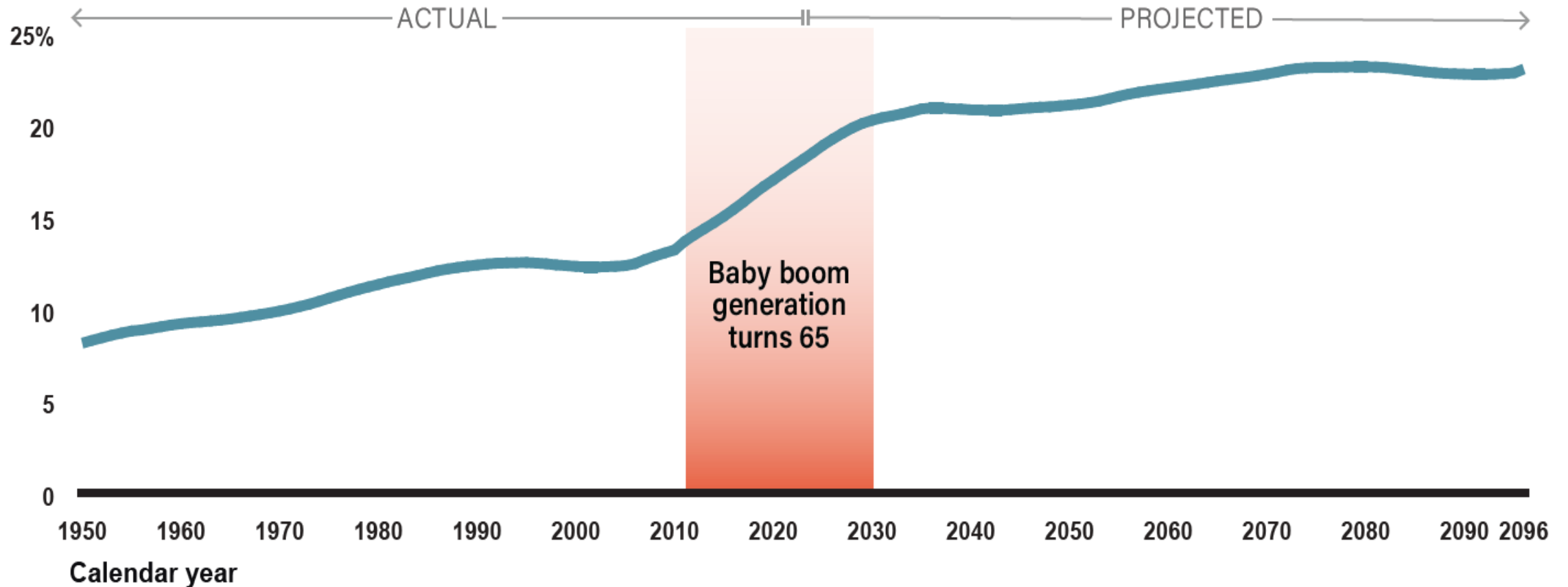
Federal Net Interest Spending as a Share of Total Spending

Fiscal year 2022 spending
8%
92%
25%

Fiscal year 2051 spending
26%
74%
32%

Fiscal year 2096 spending
48%
Net interest spending
52%
Program spending
51%

TOTAL SPENDING AS A PERCENTAGE OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Net interest spending
Program spending

Source: Congressional Budget Office data and GAO simulation. | GAO-23-106201

Older Americans Are a Greater Share of the Total Population

Percentage of population age 65 and over

Source: GAO analysis of 2023 Social Security Trustees' Report (intermediate assumptions). | GAO-23-106201