**CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES**

The Senate and House of Representatives are comprised of congressional committees. It is within these committees that bills are considered and funding levels for appropriation bills are decided upon. When a bill is introduced to either the Senate or House of Representatives, it is referred to a committee for further debate. Each committee has jurisdiction over a specific topic area, whether that be health, Medicare and Medicaid, or even transportation. Many committees are also further divided into subcommittees.

In the Senate, there are currently 24 committees. In the House, there are currently 26 committees. Certain committees and subcommittees in the Senate and House have jurisdiction over funding for ovarian cancer research and legislation related to ovarian cancer. Below, are listed the committees of interest we will be looking at and focused on throughout the year.

When a bill of interest to the ovarian cancer community is introduced and referred to a specific committee, the next step is for the committee to hold hearings on the bill. At a hearing, individuals, called witnesses, testify and describe the bills impact. Throughout the year, OCRA may ask you to watch congressional committee hearings to stay up to date on debates happening on bills of interest. By following the links below, you will be taken to that committee’s or subcommittee’s website, where you can see the most recent activity or upcoming hearings or markups. It will be important to monitor these websites frequently to keep up to date on movement of any bills of interest within committee.

**Committees of Interest**

 Senate Committee on Finance

 [Subcommittee on Health Care](https://www.finance.senate.gov/about/subcommittees#health)

 [Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pension (HELP)](https://www.help.senate.gov/)

 Senate Committee on Appropriations

 [Agriculture Rural Development, FDA Subcommittee](https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/subcommittees/agriculture-rural-development-food-and-drug-administration-and-related-agencies)

 [Labor, Health and Human Services, Education (LHHS) Subcommittee](https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/subcommittees/labor-health-and-human-services-education-and-related-agencies)

 [Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee](https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/subcommittees/military-construction-veterans-affairs-and-related-agencies)

 [State Department, Foreign Operations Subcommittee](https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/subcommittees/state-foreign-operations-and-related-programs)

 [Budget Committee](https://www.budget.senate.gov/)

 House Committee on Ways and Means

 [Subcommittee on Health](https://waysandmeans.house.gov/subcommittee/health/)

 House Committee on Energy and Commerce

 [Subcommittee on Health](https://energycommerce.house.gov/committees/subcommittee/health)

 House Committee on Appropriations

 [Agriculture Rural Development, FDA Subcommittee](https://appropriations.house.gov/subcommittees/agriculture-rural-development-food-and-drug-administration-118th-congress)

 [Labor, Health and Human Services, Education (LHHS) Subcommittee](https://appropriations.house.gov/subcommittees/labor-health-and-human-services-education-118th-congress)

 [Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee](https://appropriations.house.gov/subcommittees/military-construction-veterans-affairs-and-related-118th-congress)

 [State Department, Foreign Operations Subcommittee](https://appropriations.house.gov/subcommittees/state-foreign-operations-and-related-programs-118th-congress)

 [Budget Committee](https://budget.house.gov/)

**SENATE**

**HOUSE**



**THE UNITED STATES SENATE**

**Senate Committee on Finance**

The Senate Finance Committee is a standing committee of the United States Senate. The Committee oversees issues related to tax policy, trade and, most notable for our purposes, health programs under the Social Security Act, including Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and other health and human services programs financed by a specific tax or trust fund. The committee has six subcommittees:

* [Health Care](http://www.finance.senate.gov/about/subcommittees/#healthcare)
* [Taxation and IRS Oversight](http://www.finance.senate.gov/about/subcommittees/#taxation)
* [Energy, Natural Resources, and Infrastructure](http://www.finance.senate.gov/about/subcommittees/#energy)
* [International Trade, Customs, and Global Competitiveness](http://www.finance.senate.gov/about/subcommittees/#trade)
* [Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy](http://www.finance.senate.gov/about/subcommittees/#ss)
* [Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Growth](http://www.finance.senate.gov/about/subcommittees/#trade)

**Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee**

The HELP Committee has jurisdiction over all non-Medicare and non-Medicaid discretionary health policy and spending as well as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

**Appropriations Committee**

The Appropriations Committee controls the federal purse strings and determines funding for all government functions. This committee allocates funds to the numerous government agencies, departments, and other organizations on an annual basis. Two equivalent subcommittees directly control funds related to ovarian cancer research and education:

* **Labor Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee (LHHS)**:This is the subcommittee that determines funding for the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, Education and their sub-agencies (i.e. National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).
* **Defense Appropriations Subcommittee:** This is the subcommittee that determines funding for the Department of Defense Ovarian Cancer Research Program (DOD OCRP).

**Budget Committee**

The Budget committee oversees the nation’s federal spending policy. They provide analysis of the President’s budget and reconcile it with Congressional priorities.



**THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Ways and Means Committee**

The Committee on Ways and Means is the oldest committee of the United States Congress, and is the chief tax-writing committee in the House of Representatives. The Committee derives a large share of its jurisdiction from Article I, Section VII of the U.S. Constitution which declares, "All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives." They oversee Medicare, tax and trade policy.

* **The Subcommittee on Health** is responsible for bills and matters referred to the Committee on Ways and Means that relate to programs providing payments (from any source) for health care, health delivery systems, or health research.

**Energy & Commerce Committee**

Similar to the HELP Committee in the Senate, The Energy & Commerce Committee in the House has jurisdiction over all non-Medicare and non-Medicaid health care issues, such as research and food and drug safety. This committee is also responsible for the nation’s telecommunications, consumer protection, environmental quality, energy policy and interstate and foreign commerce.

* **The Health Subcommittee** in the House is the subdivision that reviews ovarian cancer related issues (among other health related concerns.)

**Budget Committee**

The House Budget Committee has similar jurisdiction to the Senate Budget Committee. They overseethe nation’s federal spending policy.

**Appropriations Committee**

The House Appropriations Committee, like the Senate Appropriations Committee, allocates federal dollars through appropriations bills. The House Committee oversees federal spending.

**FEDERAL AGENCIES**

There are several federal agencies that are part of the Executive Branch of government. These federal agencies manage and regulate different industries and programs. Federal agencies are also the main implementors of legislation by creating regulations. The president holds the power of nominating the heads of federal agencies.

At OCRA, there are two federal agencies of most importance to our work, the [Department of Health and Human Services](https://www.hhs.gov/about/index.html) (HHS) and the [Department of Defense](https://www.defense.gov/) (DOD).

1. **Department of Health and Human Services**

There are two main agencies under HHS that support ovarian cancer research and education programs:

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia

Despite increased knowledge and treatments for many once-deadly cancers, ovarian cancer’s risk factors, symptoms and causes are not well understood. The CDC conducts public health research and educational campaigns through numerous programs in the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control.

* [*Inside Knowledge: Get the Fact About Gynecologic Cancer*](https://www.cdc.gov/gynecologic-cancer/inside-knowledge/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/gynecologic/knowledge/index.htm) (a.k.a. *Johanna’s Law*) is a national awareness campaign for gynecologic cancers geared towards increasing knowledge among women and health care provides about cervical, ovarian, uterine, vaginal and vulvar cancers.
* *Ovarian Cancer Control Initiative (OCCI)*

The OCCI is the only initiative within the federal government focused on increasing understanding of ovarian cancer risk and enhancing ovarian cancer survivorship. Improving patient and health care provider awareness of ovarian cancer risk factors will help decrease ovarian cancer mortality rates, which have remained virtually unchanged for 40 years.

1. The National Cancer Institute (NCI), a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), one of 27 Institutes and Centers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), provides funding for ovarian cancer research through a variety of programs. Advocates work to increase NCI funding to support and expand the agency’s efforts to reduce cancer incidence and mortality through basic biomedical, translational, and clinical research.

1. **The Department of Defense: Ovarian Cancer Research Program (OCRP)**

Since 1997, Congress has appropriated funds for the [Department of Defense Ovarian Cancer Research Program (OCRP)](https://cdmrp.health.mil/ocrp/#:~:text=The%20Department%20of%20Defense%20%28DOD%29%20Ovarian%20Cancer%20Research,support%20high-impact%2C%20cutting-edge%20research%20that%20fills%20unmet%20needs.), which is modeled after the successful Breast Cancer Research Program created in 1992. OCRP funds innovative, high-risk, high-reward research which other federal research agencies do not have the flexibility to engage. The program funds multidisciplinary research efforts that investigate innovative methods of studying early detection, screening and treatment of ovarian cancer as well as attracting new investigators to the fields.