

September 15, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
The United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
The United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
The United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
The United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, and Minority Leader Jeffries,

The Society of Gynecologic Oncology (SGO) thanks you for your leadership and urges you to work together to finalize the fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriations bills, provide full and robust funding for gynecologic cancer research and care, and oppose the Administration's proposed cuts and illegal impoundments of biomedical research funding. Specifically, within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), we urge you to provide robust funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Additionally, we request that you restore full funding to the Department of Defense (DoD) Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) with strong support for ovarian and endometrial cancer research in FY 2026.

The SGO is the premier medical specialty society for health care professionals trained in the comprehensive management of gynecologic cancers. Our more than 3,000 members include physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses and patient advocates who collaborate with the Foundation for Women's Cancer to increase public awareness of gynecologic cancers and improve the care of those diagnosed with gynecologic cancers. Our primary mission focuses on supporting research, disseminating knowledge, raising the standards of practice in the prevention and treatment of gynecologic malignancies, and collaborating with other organizations dedicated to gynecologic cancers and related fields, all with the ultimate vision of eradicating gynecologic cancers.

Funding for the NIH

Significant advances have been made in the field of gynecologic oncology, through diligent research and collaboration with patients eager to be involved. However, the incidence and mortality associated with endometrial cancer continues to rise. There is still no screening test for this cancer, for which early symptoms include abnormal vaginal bleeding, which may frequently be presumed to be related to non-cancerous conditions. Robust, sustained, and predictable funding is necessary for all biomedical research, particularly research on gynecologic cancers.



Society of Gynecologic Oncology

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Recently, SGO was pleased to see that the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill which recommended funding for the NIH at \$47.2 billion—a \$400 million increase over the FY 2025 funding level, and \$7.374 billion for the NCI—a \$150 million increase over the FY 2025 funding level. SGO requests that you adopt these Senate-approved funding levels along with positive provisions in the Senate Labor-HHS report related to timely access of FY 2025 funding, restructuring of NIH, and prohibiting NIH from using multi-year funding if it would result in fewer grants being funded in FY 2026 than in FY 2024.

Funding for Gynecologic Cancer Programs at the CDC

In 2025, it is estimated that there will be over 118,920 new cases diagnosed and approximately 34,630 deaths from gynecologic cancers in the U.S.¹ The incidence of gynecologic cancers is increasing. In the last 50 years we have seen significant declines in the incidence of cervical cancer with screening and the introduction of a safe and effective high-risk human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. Yet, in 2025 it is estimated that approximately 13,360 women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with cervical cancer due to barriers to access to care and education.²

For these reasons, support for gynecologic cancer programs at the CDC is crucial. As you appropriate funding for FY 2026, the SGO requests that you support the House-approved, funding level of \$15.5 million for the Ovarian Cancer Control Initiative and \$12 million for Johanna's Law at the CDC. The Ovarian Cancer Control Initiative is a program designed to monitor demographic data and other factors at the population level around ovarian cancer diagnosis, treatment, and survival, and Johanna's Law supports programs, research projects and activities at the CDC aimed at promoting education and awareness of gynecologic cancers. Adequate support and funding for the CDC is necessary to meet the evolving public health needs for people with gynecologic cancers.

Support Gynecologic Cancer Research in the DoD

SGO continues to be concerned about the increasing prevalence and mortality of endometrial and ovarian cancers, which not only affect the health and well-being of U.S. military service members and their families, but also troop readiness. There are now almost 230,000 women who are U.S. military active-duty personnel, accounting for over 17 percent of the total force.³ Women are now the fastest growing patient population using Veterans Health Administration (VHA) services and make up 30 percent of all new VHA patients.⁴ The Journal of Women's Health reported that a 2010 study examining cancer among women treated in the VHA system found gynecologic cancers comprised 12 percent of all cancers identified in women.⁵

Endometrial cancer is the most common gynecologic cancer, and the fourth most common malignancy among women in the United States trailing only breast, lung, and colorectal. In 2025, approximately 69,120

¹ <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2025/2025-cancer-facts-and-figures-acf.pdf>

² <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2025/2025-cancer-facts-and-figures-acf.pdf>

³ <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Infographic/2023-demographics-active-duty-members.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov/about-us.asp>

⁵ [https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6301147/#:~:text=Results:%20We%20identified%201%2C330%20women,cancers%20\(p%20=%200.03\).](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6301147/#:~:text=Results:%20We%20identified%201%2C330%20women,cancers%20(p%20=%200.03).)

new cases of endometrial cancer are expected, and about 13,860 deaths.⁶ Obesity is strongly linked to endometrial cancer's incidence and mortality, particularly among Asian, Hispanic, and Black women.⁷ Endometrial cancer research is currently included in the DoD's Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program.

Additionally, ovarian cancer is the fifth leading cause of cancer-related death in women and the deadliest of gynecologic cancers. In the military, gynecologic cancers represent 12 percent of all cancer identified in women, and ovarian cancer is one of the most common diagnoses.⁸ According to the recent Military Health System (MHS) data, over 300 active Service Members encountered ovarian cancer and over 20,000 DoD beneficiaries were diagnosed with ovarian cancer over the past ten years.⁹ Created in 1997, the DoD OCRP continues to support high impact, innovative research that promotes readiness for military members and their families, as well as the overall health of all Americans. The program has funded key studies that have led to new discoveries and advancements in the treatment and understanding of ovarian cancer.

Earlier this year, Congress passed the FY 2025 continuing resolution, which drastically reduced funding for the DoD CDMRP from \$1.5 billion to \$650 million in 2025 – a 57 percent cut from the FY 2024 enacted levels. Cuts of this magnitude are disrupting basic and translational research, that impact the health of our nation's armed services, as well as veterans, military families, and the public. Therefore, our organizations urge you to restore full funding to the CDMRP.

Additionally, given the increasing prevalence of endometrial cancer and morbidity of ovarian cancer, we ask for your support for an appropriation of \$45 million, as proposed in the House-approved DoD Appropriations bill, for the OCRP, and the inclusion of endometrial cancer as a condition qualified for funds used to conduct research within the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program in FY 2026. This funding will allow for the pursuit of new research to improve the diagnosis and treatment of endometrial cancer and preserve current and future investments in ovarian cancer research.

Thank you again for your leadership and your work to finalize FY 2026 appropriations before the end of the FY to provide necessary investments for these critical programs. If you have questions, or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Carly Leon at carly.leon@sgo.org.

Sincerely,



Karen H. Lu, MD
President, Society of Gynecologic Oncology

⁶ <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2025/2025-cancer-facts-and-figures-acf.pdf>

⁷ Clarke MA, Devesa SS, Hammer A, Wentzensen N. Racial and Ethnic Differences in Hysterectomy-Corrected Uterine Corpus Cancer Mortality by Stage and Histologic Subtype. JAMA Oncol. 2022 Jun 1;8(6):895-903. doi: 10.1001/jamaoncol.2022.0009. PMID: 35511145; PMCID: PMC9073658

⁸ Leah L. Zullig, PhD, MPH, Karen M. Goldstein, MD, MSPH, Kellie J. Sims, PhD, MS, Christina D. Williams, PhD, Michael Chang, MD, Dawn Provenzale, MD, MHS, and Michael J. Kelley, MD5, J Womens Health (Larchmt). 2019 Feb 1; 28(2): 268–275.

⁹ <https://cdmrp.health.mil/ocrp/default>



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cc: The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee