

**Written Testimony**  
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**Submitted for the record to the Senate Committee on Appropriations**  
**Subcommittee on Defense**  
**June 18, 2026**

The Society of Gynecologic Oncology (SGO) appreciates the opportunity to provide outside witness testimony to the Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Defense appropriations bill. We appreciate your consideration of our requests:

- \$10 million for the recently authorized Endometrial Cancer Research Program within the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP); and
- \$52.5 million for the Ovarian Cancer Research Program (OCRP) in CDMRP.

The SGO is the premier medical specialty society for healthcare professionals trained in the comprehensive management of gynecologic cancers. Our more than 2,700 members include physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, and patient advocates who collaborate with the SGO's foundation, the Foundation for Women's Cancer, to increase awareness of gynecologic cancers and improve the care of those diagnosed with gynecologic cancers. Our 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.

**Gynecological Cancers Impact Military Readiness**

The growing prevalence and mortality of gynecological cancers like endometrial cancer and ovarian cancer affects troop readiness, as well as the health and well-being of U.S. military service members and their families. The number of women in the military is increasing with over 240,000 women who are U.S. military active-duty personnel, accounting for 18.2 percent of the total force. In addition, there are more than 1 million female active-duty spouses/dependents, and roughly 2.1 million women veterans nationwide. Women comprise a substantial share of the force and the veteran community, making research focused on cancers that uniquely affect women increasingly important to military health, readiness, deployability, and long-term survivorship.

**Endometrial Cancer Research Program**

As Congress considers funding for FY 2027, the SGO respectfully requests that you provide **\$10 million for the Endometrial Cancer Research Program that was first authorized in the FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act.**

While the incidence and mortality of most solid tumors is plateauing or decreasing across the globe, the rate of new endometrial cancer cases in the United States alone has increased by about 1% each year, and the mortality rate has risen by almost 2% annually, with even sharper increases among Asian, Hispanic, and Black women. Based on new case estimates in 2026, endometrial cancer is projected to surpass colon cancer and become the third most common malignancy diagnosed among American women. What's also alarming is that while endometrial

cancer has traditionally been more common among postmenopausal women, the incidence of endometrial cancer among younger women of reproductive age, particularly those under 39, has been increasing in recent years. Though research efforts are ongoing, there is still no screening test for this cancer.

For active-duty service members, endometrial cancer and its precursor conditions can impair readiness, deployability, fertility, and long-term health during prime service years. For military spouses and dependents, cancer creates major effects on family stability, caregiver burden, and force resilience as many active-duty service members are limited in where they can be stationed and deployed by their family members' major medical issues. For women veterans, gynecological cancers add to the growing burden of chronic and age-related disease carried long after active service ends.

For these reasons, strong support for endometrial cancer research at the Department of Defense is crucial. Endometrial cancer has been an eligible topic for research under the Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program. However, a robust, sustained, and predictable source of funding through a separate, dedicated research program is needed to attract more researchers to the field, improve our understanding of why the incidence and mortality rates are rising, and make groundbreaking discoveries that could lead to better treatments and screening tools.

SGO urges Congress to appropriate the \$10 million that has recently been authorized for endometrial cancer research program in FY 2027 to support cutting-edge research that will improve health outcomes for U.S. military service members and their families.

### **Ovarian Cancer Research Program**

Ovarian cancer is the sixth leading cause of cancer-related deaths in women and the deadliest of gynecologic cancers. Nearly 25 percent of patients diagnosed with ovarian cancer will die within a year, and less than 50 percent will survive five years. There is currently no early detection test for ovarian cancer. Consequently, more than 85 percent of patients are diagnosed in later stages when the chance of survival is significantly decreased.

The Ovarian Cancer Research Program (OCRP) has funded key studies leading to several new discoveries and advancements in the treatment and understanding of ovarian cancer. These advancements include the development of PARP inhibitors, a groundbreaking class of drugs that target DNA repair mechanisms in ovarian cancer cells, and OVA1, a blood test combined with imaging that can better identify patients at high risk for malignant ovarian cancer. Additionally, the OCRP supports the Ovarian Cancer Academy, which is a virtual career development and research training platform that pairs early-career investigators with designated mentors, to train the next generation of researchers.

Congress provided \$50 million for the DoD OCRP in FY 2026. By appropriating \$52.5 million for the program in FY 2027, the OCRP will be able to continue to support cutting edge research that will lead to better prevention and treatment strategies for this deadly cancer.

Again, the SGO appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony to the Subcommittee as you begin your work on the FY 2027 appropriations bills. We look forward to working with you to

ensure the prevention and treatment of all gynecologic cancers, improving health outcomes for all women.