



# SOUTH CAROLINA BLUES FEDERAL POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

September 2020

## Committees of the US Congress

### Part 2: Senate

Members of Congress are not expected to be experts in all areas. Instead, the in-depth work happens in committee formats. Congressional committees monitor ongoing governmental operations, identify issues suitable for legislative review, gather and evaluate information, and recommend courses of action. Each committee serves as the knowledgeable entity in their respective areas.

The US House of Representatives has 20 standing and 3 special committees. The US Senate has 16 standing and 5 special committees. There are 4 joint committees and 4 commissions comprised of members from both the House and Senate. Below is a brief summary of the responsibility of each committee in the US Senate. While any committee could potentially affect portions of our business, there are specific committees that work directly in healthcare, insurance, information technology, and workforce. Those have been denoted below.

#### **SENATE**

##### **Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry**

Responsible for oversight of all legislation that deals with our nation's agriculture industry, including food and agricultural research, education, economics and extension; innovation in the use of agricultural commodities and materials; farming programs; forestry and logging; and legislation related to nutrition and health, including nutrition and food assistance and hunger prevention, school and child nutrition programs, local and healthy food initiatives.

##### **Appropriations**

Responsible for all discretionary spending legislation in the Senate. This committee writes the legislation that allocates federal funds to the numerous government agencies, departments and organizations on an annual basis. Appropriations are limited to the levels set by a Budget Resolution, drafted by the Senate Budget Committee.

*Can affect our industry.*

##### **Armed Services**

Responsible for dealing with issues primarily associated with the development of weapons systems or military operations; the common defense; the Department of Defense, the Department of Army, the Department of the Navy and the Department of the Air Force.

*Can affect our industry.*

##### **Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs**

Responsible for jurisdiction on banking, insurance, financial markets, securities, housing, urban development, mass transit, international trade and finance, and economic policy.

*Can affect our industry.*

##### **Budget**

Responsible for drafting Congress' annual budget plan and monitoring action on the budget for the Federal Government. Committee also has jurisdiction over the operation of the Congressional Budget Office.

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## **Commerce, Science, and Transportation**

Responsible for coastal zone management, highway safety, interstate commerce, nonmilitary aeronautical and space sciences, sports, standards and measurement and marine fisheries as well as regulation of consumer products and services, including testing related to toxic substances rather than pesticides, and except for credit, financial services and housing.

*Can affect our industry.*

## **Energy and Natural Resources**

Responsible for matters related to National Energy Policy, including international energy affairs and emergency preparedness; nuclear waste policy; privatization of federal assets; territorial policy and Native Hawaiian matters.

## **Environment and Public Works**

Responsible for issues of air and noise pollution, environmental policy, fisheries and wildlife, public buildings, works, bridges and dams, solid waste disposal and recycling, water pollution. Subcommittees deal with policy issues in connection with protection of pregnant women, infants and children from environmental hazards and job creation through the development and deployment of green technologies and practices.

*Can affect our industry.*

## **Finance**

Responsible for matters relating to: taxation and other revenue measures generally, the transportation of dutiable goods, deposit of public moneys, general revenue sharing; as well as health programs under the Social Security Act, including Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and other health and human services programs financed by a specific tax and trust fund; national social security.

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## **Foreign Relations**

Responsible for overseeing and funding foreign aid programs as well as funding, arms sales and training for national allies. The committee is also responsible for holding confirmation hearings for high-level positions in the Department of State.

## **Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions**

Responsible for most agencies, institutes, and programs of the Department of Health and Human Services, including the FDA, CDC, NIH, AOA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. The Committee also oversees public health and health insurance statutes to address emerging threats and changing patterns in the health-care industry. This committee has jurisdiction over issues related to education and workforce development, including Head Start, the No Child Left Behind Act, Higher Education, the Arts and Humanities, Student Financial Assistance, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Job and Vocational Training and the Workforce Investment Act. This committee also deals with federal labor and employment laws and private retirement plans and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

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## **Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

Responsible for matters related to the Department of Homeland Security and other homeland security concerns, as well as the functioning of the government itself, including the National Archives, budget and accounting measures other than appropriations, the Census, the federal civil service, the affairs of the District of Columbia, and the USPS.

## **Judiciary**

Responsible for oversight of the Department of Justice and the agencies under the Department's Jurisdiction, including the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security and is also charged with the consideration of Supreme Court nominations, appellate court nominations, and district court nominations.

### **Rules and Administration**

Responsible for the rules of the Senate and administration of congressional buildings as well as the credentials and qualifications of members of the Senate, including responsibility for dealing with contested elections.

### **Small Business and Entrepreneurship**

Responsible for the Small Business Administration and is also charged with researching and investigating all problems of American small business enterprises.

*Can affect our industry.*

### **Veterans' Affairs**

Responsible for being an advocate for our veterans. This committee convenes hearings, conducts oversight and investigations, and is responsible for all legislation relating to veterans benefits and medical care.

*Can affect our industry.*

### **Special Committee on Aging**

Responsible for issues relating to health care for seniors, long-term care, elder fraud and abuse, social security and retirement savings, older workers, emergency preparedness for seniors, assisting seniors with rising energy costs and affordable senior housing.

*Can affect our industry.*

### **Caucus on International Narcotics Control**

Responsible for monitoring and encouraging the US government and private programs seeking to expand international cooperation against drug abuse and narcotics trafficking and promote international compliance with narcotics control treaties, including eradication.

### **Select Committee on Ethics**

Responsible for publishing regulations necessary to implement the Senate Code of Conduct, and to issue interpretative rulings and advisory opinions regarding the application of any law, rule or regulation within the Committee's jurisdiction.

### **Indian Affairs**

Responsible for the Indian County provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, appropriations budget, federal recognition of tribes, health care reform, Indian economic development, education, energy and water rights.

### **Select Committee on Intelligence**

Responsible for oversight of the United States Intelligence Community including the agencies and bureaus of the federal government who provide information and analysis for leaders of the executive and legislative branches.

**POLITICAL FUN**

**HELP THE IDEA BECOME A BILL.**

