

TABLE 6-1 **Party Committees in the Senate and House**

Committee	Function
<b>Senate Democratic</b>	
Policy and Communications Center	Considers party positions on specific measures and assists the party leader in scheduling bills; facilitates communication between Senate Democrats and to external audiences
Steering and Outreach	Assigns Democrats to committees and coordinates policy, legislative, and message issues for the Democratic Conference
Campaign	Works to elect Democrats to the Senate
<b>Senate Republican</b>	
Policy	Provides summaries of GOP positions on specific issues; researches procedural and substantive issues; drafts policy alternatives
Committee on Committees	Assigns Republicans to committees
Campaign	Works to elect Republicans to the Senate
<b>House Democratic</b>	
Steering and Policy	Assists the leadership and Democratic Caucus in establishing, implementing, researching, and communicating party priorities; assigns Democrats to committees
Campaign	Works to elect Democrats to the House
<b>House Republican</b>	
Policy	Considers majority party proposals and works for consensus among Republican members
Steering	Assigns Republicans to standing committees
Campaign	Works to elect Republicans to the House

*Note:* The official names of the parties' campaign committees are as follows: Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, National Republican Senatorial Committee, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and National Republican Congressional Committee.

**TABLE 7-1 Standing Committees of the House and Senate,  
114th Congress, 2015–2017**

House	Senate
Agriculture	Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
Appropriations	Appropriations
Armed Services	Armed Services
Budget	Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Education and the Workforce	Budget
Energy and Commerce	Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Ethics	Energy and Natural Resources
Financial Services	Environment and Public Works
Foreign Affairs	Finance
Homeland Security	Foreign Relations
House Administration	Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Judiciary	Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Natural Resources	Judiciary
Oversight and Government Reform	Rules and Administration
Rules	Small Business and Entrepreneurship
Science, Space, and Technology	Veterans' Affairs
Small Business	
Transportation and Infrastructure	
Veterans' Affairs	
Ways and Means	

*Sources:* House and Senate committee web pages.

TABLE 7-2 **House and Senate Committee Comparison**

Category	House	Senate
Number of standing committees	20	16
Committee/subcommittee assignments per member	About 6	About 11
Power or prestige committees	Appropriations, Budget, Commerce, Financial Services, Rules, Ways and Means	Appropriations, Armed Services, Commerce, Finance, Foreign Relations <sup>1</sup>
Treaties and nominations submitted by the president	No authority	Committees review
Floor debate	Representatives' activity is somewhat confined to the bills reported from the panels on which they serve	Senators can choose to influence any policy area regardless of their committee assignments
Committee consideration of legislation	More difficult to bypass	Easier to bypass <sup>2</sup>
Committee chairs	Subject to party and speakership influence that can limit the chair's discretionary authority over committee operations	Freer rein to manage committees
Committee staff	Often assertive in advocating ideas and proposals	More influential in shaping the legislative agenda
Subcommittee chairmanships	Representatives of the majority party usually must wait at least one term	Majority party senators, regardless of their seniority, usually chair subcommittees

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<sup>1</sup> Almost every senator is assigned to one of these committees.

<sup>2</sup> For example, by allowing riders—unrelated policy proposals—to measures pending on the floor.