Appropriations 101: Additional Resources

1. Congressional Research Service - "The Appropriations Process: A Brief Overview" (R47106)

Source: https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47106

This comprehensive CRS report provides an authoritative, nonpartisan overview of the entire appropriations process from budget submission through final enactment. The report systematically explains the constitutional foundation, key players, timeline, and procedural requirements that govern how Congress funds the federal government. As a CRS product, it represents the gold standard for objective congressional procedure analysis and is regularly updated to reflect current practices and rule changes.

2. CRS Appropriations Status Table - Real-Time Bill Tracking

Source: https://crsreports.congress.gov/AppropriationsStatusTable/

This dynamic online resource tracks the real-time status of all 12 annual appropriations bills, continuing resolutions, and supplemental appropriations. You can monitor which subcommittees have marked up bills, floor schedules, conference committee actions, and presidential signatures. The table format allows easy comparison across different appropriations measures and fiscal years dating back to 1999. This is an essential practical tool for understanding how theoretical appropriations processes play out in real congressional action and demonstrates the often messy reality of meeting fiscal year deadlines.

3. "The Fiscal Ship" - Interactive Budget Simulation Game

Source: https://fiscalship.org/

Developed by the Brookings Institution and the Wilson Center, this engaging interactive simulation allows students to experience firsthand the difficult trade-offs inherent in federal budget decisions. Players must select tax and spending policies to manage projected debt growth over 25 years while pursuing their chosen policy goals, such as reducing inequality or strengthening defense. The game is designed to be accessible to users with little budget background while remaining grounded in actual fiscal data.

4. Library of Congress - "Appropriations and Omnibus Legislation" Research Guide

Source: https://guides.loc.gov/legislative-history/appropriations-and-omnibus-legislation

This specialized research guide from the Library of Congress explains how to track appropriations bills through their legislative history, from initial subcommittee consideration through final enactment. The guide includes practical tips for accessing Congressional Budget Justifications (CBJs), committee reports, and floor debate records that form the documentary foundation of appropriations decisions.