

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1171

To keep girls in school around the world, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 18, 2017

Mrs. SHAHEEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To keep girls in school around the world, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Keeping Girls in
5 School Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-**
7 **FINED.**

8 In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional com-
9 mittees” means—

10 (1) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
11 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

1 (2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
2 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
3 resentatives.

4 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE AND FINDINGS.**

5 (a) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this Act is to support
6 empowerment, economic security, and educational oppor-
7 tunities for adolescent girls around the world.

8 (b) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following find-
9 ings:

10 (1) Adolescence is a critical period in a girl’s
11 life, when significant physical, emotional, and social
12 changes shape her future.

13 (2) According to the United Nations Edu-
14 cational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
15 (UNESCO), approximately 130,000,000 girls
16 around the world are not in school and millions more
17 are failing to acquire basic reading, writing, and
18 numeracy skills.

19 (3) Girls between the ages of 10 and 19 are
20 three times more likely than boys to be kept out of
21 school, particularly in countries affected by conflict.

22 (4) Due to discriminatory gender norms and ex-
23 pectations, disparities in access to safe and quality
24 education manifest early in a girl’s life and continue
25 to become more pronounced throughout adolescence.

1 (5) Adolescent girls who are not in school are
2 particularly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, child, early
3 and forced marriage, and other forms of violence
4 which are detrimental to their futures, as evidenced
5 by the following statistics:

6 (A) Each year, 380,000 adolescent girls
7 and young women become newly infected with
8 HIV, more than 1,000 every day, and comprise
9 the fastest-growing demographic for new infec-
10 tions in sub-Saharan Africa.

11 (B) Each year, 15,000,000 adolescent girls
12 around the world are married before their 18th
13 birthday, and more than 700,000,000 women
14 alive today were married as children.

15 (C) One-quarter to one-half of girls in de-
16 veloping countries become mothers before the
17 age of 18, and girls under 15 are five times
18 more likely to die during childbirth than women
19 in their 20s.

20 (6) While two-thirds of countries have achieved
21 gender parity in primary education, only 40 percent
22 have achieved gender parity in secondary education.

23 (7) Adolescent girls who remain in school are
24 more likely to live longer, marry later, have healthier
25 children, and, as adults, earn an income to support

1 their families, thereby contributing to the economic
2 advancement of communities and nations.

3 (8) The United States Global Strategy to Em-
4 power Adolescent Girls has brought together the De-
5 partment of State, the United States Agency for
6 International Development (USAID), the Peace
7 Corps, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation,
8 as well as other agencies and programs such as the
9 President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief
10 (PEPFAR), to address the range of challenges pre-
11 venting adolescent girls from attaining an inclusive
12 and equitable quality education leading to relevant
13 learning outcomes.

14 (9) Since July 2015, more than 100 public-pri-
15 vate partnerships have been formed between the
16 United States Government and external partners to
17 support innovative and community-led solutions in
18 targeted countries, including Malawi and Tanzania,
19 to ensure adolescent girls receive a quality edu-
20 cation.

21 (10) PEPFAR, through its DREAMS (Deter-
22 mined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored,
23 and Safe) Initiative, has worked to address a num-
24 ber of the specific barriers to education that adoles-
25 cent girls face.

1 (11) According to the United States Global
2 Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls, which is the
3 first foreign policy document in the world solely
4 dedicated to the rights and empowerment of girls
5 globally, “[w]hile the Millennium Development Goals
6 improved outcomes for girls in primary education,
7 they also highlighted the need for a targeted focus
8 on adolescents and young adults, particularly re-
9 garding the transition to and completion of sec-
10 ondary school”.

11 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

12 It is the sense of Congress that—

13 (1) education is a human right, and girls of all
14 ages deserve an education that is equal, in all as-
15 pects, to that of boys;

16 (2) the United States has been a global leader
17 in efforts to expand and improve educational oppor-
18 tunities for those who have been traditionally
19 disenfranchised, particularly women and girls;

20 (3) gains with respect to girls’ secondary edu-
21 cation and empowerment have been proven to cor-
22 relate strongly with progress in gender equality and
23 women’s rights, as well as economic and social
24 progress, and achieving gender equality should be a
25 priority goal of United States foreign policy;

1 (4) achieving gender parity in both access to
 2 and quality of educational opportunity contributes
 3 significantly to economic growth and development,
 4 thereby lowering the risk for violence and instability;
 5 and

6 (5) education is a lifesaving humanitarian inter-
 7 vention that protects the lives, futures, and well-
 8 being of girls.

9 **TITLE I—SECONDARY EDU-**
 10 **CATION FOR ADOLESCENT**
 11 **GIRLS**

12 **SEC. 101. ADOLESCENT GIRLS EDUCATION CHALLENGE**
 13 **FUND.**

14 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established an Ado-
 15 lescent Girls Education Challenge Fund from which funds
 16 may be made available for the Department of State, the
 17 United States Agency for International Development, and
 18 other Federal departments and agencies to work with ex-
 19 ternal partners to implement innovative programs to en-
 20 sure that adolescent girls enroll and succeed in school.

21 (b) **AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.**—Programs initiated
 22 through the Fund may—

23 (1) create strategic, focused, cross-sectoral, and
 24 results-oriented partnerships, including with adoles-

1 cent girls, to promote their education, economic se-
2 curity, and empowerment;

3 (2) apply comprehensive scientific and research-
4 based approaches, aligned, where possible, with local
5 development priorities, to support sustainable devel-
6 opment outcomes;

7 (3) leverage additional resources from public,
8 private, for-profit, and nonprofit organizations, in-
9 cluding those based inside partner countries, as well
10 as institutions of higher education, United States
11 and non-United States Government organizations,
12 and international donor organization to ensure sus-
13 tainable finance and impact; and

14 (4) ensure schools provide safe and quality edu-
15 cational opportunities so that girls can enroll in and
16 regularly attend school, successfully transition from
17 primary to secondary school, and eventually grad-
18 uate having achieved learning outcomes and posi-
19 tioned to make healthy transitions to adulthood.

20 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
21 authorized to be appropriated at least \$35,000,000 for
22 each fiscal year for the Fund established under this sec-
23 tion.

1 **SEC. 102. ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL OPPOR-**
2 **TUNITIES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the
4 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
5 national Development, in coordination with other Federal
6 departments and agencies, are authorized to initiate and
7 advance programs that support educational opportunities
8 for adolescent girls and which reduce specific barriers ado-
9 lescent girls face in attaining inclusive and equitable edu-
10 cational opportunities.

11 (b) SPECIFIC BARRIERS.—In this subsection, the
12 term “specific barriers” includes—

- 13 (1) harmful societal and cultural norms;
- 14 (2) distance from a secondary school;
- 15 (3) safety at school or traveling to school;
- 16 (4) cost of secondary schooling, including fees,
17 clothing, and supplies;
- 18 (5) inadequate sanitation facilities and products
19 available at secondary schools;
- 20 (6) prioritization of boys’ secondary education;
- 21 (7) poor nutrition;
- 22 (8) child, early, and forced marriage;
- 23 (9) early pregnancy and motherhood;
- 24 (10) female genital mutilation;
- 25 (11) HIV infection; and

1 (12) discrimination based on religious or ethnic
2 identity.

3 (c) COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT.—The United
4 States Agency for International Development Senior Coor-
5 dinator for International Basic Education Assistance, in
6 coordination with the United States Agency for Inter-
7 national Development Senior Coordinator for Gender
8 Equality and Women’s Empowerment and the Amba-
9 sador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues at the Depart-
10 ment of State, shall be responsible for the oversight and
11 coordination of all resources and activities of the United
12 States Government relating to promoting educational op-
13 portunities for adolescent girls.

14 **SEC. 103. MONITORING AND EVALUATION.**

15 The Secretary of State and the Administrator of the
16 United States Agency for International Development shall
17 seek to determine that programs carried out under this
18 Act—

19 (1) employ rigorous monitoring and evaluation
20 methodologies, including an ex post evaluation, to
21 ensure programs and activities demonstrably close
22 the gap in gender parity for secondary education
23 and improve the quality of education offered to ado-
24 lescent girls;

1 (2) disaggregate all data collected and reported
2 by age, gender, marital and motherhood status, and
3 urbanity, to the extent practicable and appropriate;
4 and

5 (3) adhere to the Department of State’s Policy
6 Guidance on Promoting Gender Equality and
7 USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empower-
8 ment Policy.

9 **SEC. 104. TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING TO CONGRESS.**

10 Not later than March 31, 2018, and annually there-
11 after, the Administrator of the United States Agency for
12 International Development, in coordination with the Sec-
13 retary of State, shall submit a report to the appropriate
14 congressional committees that—

15 (1) details programs initiated under this Act
16 that address specific barriers to adolescent girls edu-
17 cation; and

18 (2) describes the activities and partnerships of
19 the Adolescent Girls Education Challenge Fund, as
20 well as the outcomes and metrics used to measure
21 its effectiveness.

22 **SEC. 105. SUNSET.**

23 The authorities under this title shall terminate upon
24 certification by the Secretary of State to the appropriate
25 congressional committees that gender parity in both qual-

1 ity of and access to secondary education for adolescent
2 boys and girls has been achieved in the countries which
3 receive United States development assistance.

4 **TITLE II—UNITED STATES GLOB-**
5 **AL STRATEGY TO EMPOWER**
6 **ADOLESCENT GIRLS**

7 **SEC. 201. GLOBAL STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
9 date of the enactment of this Act, and every 5 years there-
10 after, the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s
11 Issues at the Department of State (referred to in this title
12 as the “Ambassador-at-Large”), in consultation with the
13 Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women’s
14 Empowerment at the United States Agency for Inter-
15 national Development (referred to in this title as the “Sen-
16 ior Coordinator”), shall—

17 (1) develop or review and update a United
18 States global strategy to empower adolescent girls;

19 (2) submit the strategy to the appropriate con-
20 gressional committees; and

21 (3) make the strategy and review publicly avail-
22 able on the Internet.

23 (b) INITIAL STRATEGY.—For the purposes of this
24 section, the “United States Global Strategy to Empower

1 Adolescent Girls”, issued in March 2016, shall be deemed
2 to fulfill the initial requirement under subsection (a).

3 (c) COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION.—In devel-
4 oping the strategy under subsection (a), the Ambassador-
5 at-Large and the Senior Coordinator shall consult with—

6 (1) the heads of relevant Federal agencies and
7 their designees, as well as experts on adolescent
8 girls, gender equality, and empowerment throughout
9 Federal agencies;

10 (2) the appropriate congressional committees;

11 (3) representatives of civil society and multilat-
12 eral organizations with demonstrated experience and
13 expertise in empowering adolescent girls or pro-
14 moting gender equality, including local civil society
15 organizations and beneficiaries where possible; and

16 (4) local organizations and beneficiaries, includ-
17 ing youth and adolescent girls’ organizations.

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