

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 1580

AN ACT

To enhance the transparency, improve the coordination, and intensify the impact of assistance to support access to primary and secondary education for displaced children and persons, including women and girls, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Girls’ Ac-
3 cess to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) As of June 2018, more than 68,000,000
7 people have been displaced by disasters and conflicts
8 around the world, the highest number recorded since
9 the end of World War II, of which more than
10 25,000,000 people are refugees.

11 (2) More than half of the population of refugees
12 are children and, according to the United Nations
13 High Commissioner for Refugees, nearly 4,000,000
14 school-aged refugee children lack access to primary
15 education.

16 (3) Education offers socioeconomic opportuni-
17 ties, psychological stability, and physical protection
18 for displaced people, particularly for women and
19 girls, who might otherwise be vulnerable to severe
20 forms of trafficking in persons (as such term is de-
21 fined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims
22 Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(9)), child
23 marriage, sexual exploitation, or economic disenfran-
24 chisement.

25 (4) Displaced children face considerable bar-
26 riers to accessing educational services and, because

1 the duration of such displacement is, on average, 26
2 years, such children may spend the entirety of their
3 childhood without access to such services.

4 (5) Despite the rising need for educational serv-
5 ices, as of 2016, less than two percent of humani-
6 tarian aid was directed toward educational services.

7 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

8 It is the sense of Congress that—

9 (1) it is critical to ensure that children, particu-
10 larly girls, displaced by conflicts overseas are able to
11 access educational services because such access can
12 combat extremism and reduce exploitation and pov-
13 erty; and

14 (2) the educational needs of vulnerable women
15 and girls should be considered in the design, imple-
16 mentation, and evaluation of related United States
17 foreign assistance policies and programs.

18 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

19 It is the policy of the United States to—

20 (1) partner with and encourage other countries,
21 public and private multilateral institutions, and non-
22 governmental and civil society organizations, includ-
23 ing faith-based organizations and organizations rep-
24 resenting parents and children, to support efforts to

1 ensure that displaced children have access to safe
2 primary and secondary education;

3 (2) work with donors to enhance training and
4 capacity-building for the governments of countries
5 hosting significant numbers of displaced people to
6 design, implement, and monitor programs to effec-
7 tively address barriers to such education; and

8 (3) coordinate with the governments of coun-
9 tries hosting significant numbers of displaced people
10 to—

11 (A) promote the inclusion of displaced chil-
12 dren into the educational systems of such coun-
13 tries; and

14 (B) in circumstances in which such inclu-
15 sion is difficult, develop innovative approaches
16 to providing safe primary and secondary edu-
17 cational opportunities, such as encouraging
18 schools to permit children to be educated by ex-
19 tending the hours of schooling or expanding the
20 number of teachers.

21 **SEC. 5. UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT EDU-**
22 **CATIONAL SERVICES FOR DISPLACED CHIL-**
23 **DREN.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the
25 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-

1 national Development are authorized to prioritize and ad-
2 vance ongoing efforts to support programs that—

3 (1) provide safe primary and secondary edu-
4 cation for displaced children;

5 (2) build the capacity of institutions in coun-
6 tries hosting displaced people to prevent discrimina-
7 tion against displaced children, especially displaced
8 girls, who seek access to such education; and

9 (3) help increase the access of displaced chil-
10 dren, especially displaced girls, to educational, eco-
11 nomic, and entrepreneurial opportunities, including
12 through the governmental authorities responsible for
13 educational or youth services in such host countries.

14 (b) COORDINATION WITH MULTILATERAL ORGANI-
15 ZATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator are au-
16 thorized to coordinate with the World Bank, appropriate
17 agencies of the United Nations, and other relevant multi-
18 lateral organizations to work with governments in other
19 countries to collect relevant data, disaggregated by age
20 and gender, on the ability of displaced people to access
21 education and participate in economic activity, in order
22 to improve the targeting, monitoring, and evaluation of re-
23 lated assistance efforts.

24 (c) COORDINATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR AND
25 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary and the

1 Administrator are authorized to work with private sector
2 and civil society organizations to promote safe primary
3 and secondary education for displaced children.

4 **SEC. 6. REPORT.**

5 The Secretary and the Administrator shall include in
6 the report required under section 7 of the READ Act (di-
7 vision A of Public Law 115–56; 22 U.S.C. 2151c note)
8 a description of any primary or secondary educational
9 services supported by programs for natural or manmade
10 disaster relief or response that specifically address the
11 needs of displaced girls.

Passed the Senate December 12, 2018.

Attest:

Secretary.

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