

115TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

H. R. 2408

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-
- ${\it 2\ tives\ of\ the\ United\ States\ of\ America\ in\ Congress\ assembled},$

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

- This Act may be cited as the "Protecting Girls' Ac-
- 3 cess to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act" or the
- 4 "Protecting Girls' Access to Education Act".

5 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

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- 6 Congress finds the following:
- 7 (1) At the start of 2017, more than 65 million 8 people have been displaced by disasters and conflicts 9 around the world, the highest number recorded since 10 the end of World War II, of which more than 21 11 million people are refugees.
 - (2) More than half of the population of displaced people are children and, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, nearly 4 million school-aged displaced children lack access to primary education.
 - (3) Education offers socioeconomic opportunities, psychological stability, and physical protection for displaced people, particularly for women and girls, who might otherwise be vulnerable to severe forms of trafficking in persons (as such term is defined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(9))), child marriage, sexual exploitation, or economic disenfranchisement, and contributes to long-term recovery

- and economic opportunities for displaced people and
 for the communities hosting them.
- 3 (4) Displaced children face considerable bar-4 riers to accessing educational services and, because 5 the duration of such displacement is, on average, 20 6 years, such children may spend the entirety of their 7 childhood without access to such services.
- 8 (5) Despite the rising need for such services, 9 less than 2 percent of global emergency aid was di-10 rected toward educational services in 2016.

11 SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

- 12 It is the sense of Congress that—
- 13 (1) it is critical to ensure that children, particu-14 larly girls, displaced by conflicts overseas are able to 15 access educational services because such access can 16 combat extremism and reduce exploitation and pov-17 erty; and
 - (2) the educational needs of vulnerable women and girls should be considered in the design, implementation, and evaluation of related United States foreign assistance policies and programs.

22 SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

- It is the policy of the United States to—
- (1) partner with and encourage other countries,
 public and private multilateral institutions, and non-

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- governmental and civil society organizations, including faith-based organizations and organizations representing parents and children, to support efforts to ensure that displaced children have access to safe primary and secondary education;
 - (2) work with donors to enhance training and capacity-building for the governments of countries hosting significant numbers of displaced people to design, implement, and monitor programs to effectively address barriers to such education;
 - (3) incorporate into the design and implementation of such programs measures to evaluate the impact of the programs on girls, with respect to the reduction of child marriage, gender-based violence, and severe forms of trafficking in persons (as such term is defined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(9))); and
 - (4) coordinate with the governments of countries hosting significant numbers of displaced people to—
- 22 (A) promote the inclusion of displaced chil-23 dren into the educational systems of such coun-24 tries; and

(B) develop innovative approaches to pro-
viding safe primary and secondary educational
opportunities in circumstances in which such in-
clusion is not possible or appropriate, such as
schools that permit more children to be edu-
cated by extending the hours of schooling and
expanding the number of teachers.
SEC. 5. UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT EDU-
CATIONAL SERVICES FOR DISPLACED CHIL-
DREN.
(a) In General.—The Secretary of State and the
Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
national Development are authorized to prioritize and ad-
vance ongoing efforts to support programs that—
(1) provide safe primary and secondary edu-
cation for displaced children;
(2) build the capacity of institutions in coun-
tries hosting displaced people to prevent discrimina-
tion against displaced children, especially displaced
girls, who seek access to such education; and
(3) help increase the access of displaced chil-
dren, especially displaced girls, to educational, eco-
nomic, and entrepreneurial opportunities, including

through the governmental authorities responsible for

educational or youth services in such host countries.

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- 1 (b) COORDINATION WITH MULTILATERAL ORGANI-
- 2 ZATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator are au-
- 3 thorized to coordinate with the World Bank, appropriate
- 4 agencies of the United Nations, and other relevant multi-
- 5 lateral organizations to work with governments in other
- 6 countries to collect relevant data, disaggregated by age
- 7 and gender, on the ability of displaced people to access
- 8 education and participate in economic activity, in order
- 9 to improve the targeting, monitoring, and evaluation of re-
- 10 lated assistance efforts.
- 11 (c) Coordination With Private Sector and
- 12 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary and the
- 13 Administrator are authorized to work with private sector
- 14 and civil society organizations to promote safe primary
- 15 and secondary education for displaced children.
- 16 SEC. 6. REPORT.
- During the 5-year period beginning on the date of
- 18 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Adminis-
- 19 trator shall include in any report or evaluation submitted
- 20 to Congress relating to a foreign assistance program for
- 21 natural or manmade disaster relief or response the fol-
- 22 lowing information (to the extent practicable and appro-
- 23 priate):

1	(1) A breakdown of the beneficiaries of such
2	program by location, age, gender, marital status,
3	and school enrollment status.
4	(2) A description of how such program benefits
5	displaced people.
6	(3) A description of any primary or secondary
7	educational services supported by such program that
8	specifically address the needs of displaced girls.
	Passed the House of Representatives October 3,
	2017.

Attest:

Clerk.

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