

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 2153

AN ACT

To support empowerment, economic security, and educational opportunities for adolescent girls 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

2 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
3 “Keeping Girls in School Act”.

4 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
5 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Appropriate congressional committees defined.
- Sec. 3. Findings.
- Sec. 4. Sense of Congress.
- Sec. 5. Secondary education for adolescent girls.
- Sec. 6. Global strategy requirement.
- Sec. 7. Transparency and reporting to Congress.

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 Affairs and the
11 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
12 resentatives; and

13 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
14 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

15 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

16 Congress finds the following:

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

20 (2) Adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable
21 to HIV/AIDS, child, early and forced marriage, and

1 other forms of violence which are detrimental to
2 their futures, as evidenced by the following statistics:

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

8 (B) Each year, 12,000,000 adolescent girls
9 around the world are married before their 18th
10 birthday, and more than 650,000,000 women
11 alive today were married as children.

12 (C) Child marriages often interrupt school-
13 ing, limit opportunities, and impact the phys-
14 ical, psychological and social well-being of such
15 girls. If there is no reduction in child marriage,
16 the global number of women married as chil-
17 dren is projected to increase by 150,000,000 by
18 2030.

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

24 (3) Approximately 130,000,000 girls around the
25 world are not in school, and millions more are failing

1 to acquire basic reading, writing, and numeracy
2 skills.

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

6 (5) Due to discriminatory gender norms and ex-
7 pectations, disparities in access to safe and quality
8 education manifest early in a girl's life and continue
9 to become more pronounced throughout adolescence.

10 (6) Girls living with disabilities are less likely to
11 start school and transition to secondary school than
12 boys living with disabilities and other children, and
13 just 1 percent of women with disabilities are literate
14 globally.

15 (7) While two-thirds of all countries have
16 achieved gender parity in primary education, only 40
17 percent have achieved gender parity in secondary
18 education.

19 (8) Adolescent girls who remain in school are
20 more likely to live longer, marry later, have healthier
21 children, and, as adults, earn an income to support
22 their families, thereby contributing to the economic
23 advancement of communities and nations.

24 (9) Since July 2015, more than 100 public-pri-
25 vate partnerships have been formed between the

1 United States Government and external partners to
2 support innovative and community-led solutions in
3 targeted countries, including Malawi and Tanzania,
4 to ensure adolescent girls receive a quality edu-
5 cation.

6 (10) The United States Global Strategy to Em-
7 power Adolescent Girls, published in March 2016,
8 has brought together the Department of State, the
9 United States Agency for International Develop-
10 ment, the Peace Corps, and the Millennium Chal-
11 lenge Corporation, as well as other agencies and pro-
12 grams such as the President’s Emergency Fund for
13 AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), to address the range of
14 challenges preventing adolescent girls from attaining
15 an inclusive and equitable quality education leading
16 to relevant learning outcomes.

17 (11) According to the United States Global
18 Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls, which is the
19 first foreign policy document in the world solely
20 dedicated to the rights and empowerment of girls
21 globally, “[w]hile the Millennium Development Goals
22 improved outcomes for girls in primary education,
23 they also highlighted the need for a targeted focus
24 on adolescents and young adults, particularly re-

1 garding the transition to and completion of sec-
2 ondary school”.

3 (12) PEPFAR, through its DREAMS (Deter-
4 mined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored,
5 and Safe) Initiative, has worked to address a num-
6 ber of the specific barriers to education that adoles-
7 cent girls face.

8 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

9 It is the sense of Congress that—

10 (1) every child, regardless of place of birth, de-
11 serves an equal opportunity to access quality edu-
12 cation;

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

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

23 (4) achieving gender parity in both access to
24 and quality of educational opportunity contributes
25 significantly to economic growth and development,

1 thereby lowering the risk for violence and instability;
2 and

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

6 **SEC. 5. SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS.**

7 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Administrator of the United
8 States Agency for International Development may enter
9 into acquisition, assistance, or results-based financing
10 agreements, including agreements combining more than
11 one such feature, for activities addressing the barriers de-
12 scribed in subsection (b) that adolescent girls face in ac-
13 cessing a quality secondary education. Such activities
14 shall—

15 (1) set outcome-based targets to demonstrate
16 qualitative gains;

17 (2) use existing United States Government
18 strategies and frameworks relevant to international
19 basic education and gender equality, including evi-
20 dence-based interventions, to—

21 (A) integrate new technologies and ap-
22 proaches, including to establish or continue
23 public-private partnerships or to pilot the use of
24 development impact bonds (the results of which
25 are verified by an independent evaluation);

1 (B) to the greatest extent possible, apply
2 quasi-experimental and scientific, research-
3 based approaches;

4 (C) promote inclusive, equitable and sus-
5 tainable educational achievement; and

6 (D) support a responsible transition to
7 education systems that are sustainably financed
8 by domestic governments; and

9 (3) ensure that schools provide safe and quality
10 educational opportunities and create empowering en-
11 vironments, so that girls can enroll in and regularly
12 attend school, successfully transition from primary
13 to secondary school, and eventually graduate having
14 achieved learning outcomes and positioned to make
15 healthy transitions into adulthood.

16 (b) SPECIFIC BARRIERS.—The barriers described in
17 this subsection include—

18 (1) harmful societal and cultural norms;

19 (2) lack of safety at school or traveling to
20 school, including harassment and other forms of
21 physical, sexual, or psychological violence;

22 (3) child, early, and forced marriage;

23 (4) female genital mutilation;

24 (5) distance from a secondary school;

1 (6) cost of secondary schooling, including fees,
2 clothing, and supplies;

3 (7) inadequate sanitation facilities and products
4 available at secondary schools;

5 (8) prioritization of boys' secondary education;

6 (9) poor nutrition;

7 (10) early pregnancy and motherhood;

8 (11) HIV infection;

9 (12) disability;

10 (13) discrimination based on religious or ethnic
11 identity; and

12 (14) heavy workload due to household tasks.

13 (c) COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The United States Agency
15 for International Development Senior Coordinator
16 for International Basic Education Assistance, in co-
17 ordination with the United States Agency for Inter-
18 national Development Senior Coordinator for Gender
19 Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Am-
20 bassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues at the
21 Department of State, shall be responsible for the
22 oversight and coordination of all activities of the
23 United States Government carried out under this
24 section.

1 (2) DEVELOPMENT OF AGREEMENTS.—In the
2 development of results-based financing agreements
3 described in subsection (a), the Senior Coordinators
4 shall consult with the United States Agency for
5 International Development Innovation, Technology,
6 and Research Hub or any successor center that is
7 responsible for developing innovative tools and ap-
8 proaches to accelerate development impact.

9 (3) COORDINATION WITH OTHER STRATE-
10 GIES.—Activities carried out under this section shall
11 also be carried out in coordination with—

12 (A) the United States Global Strategy to
13 Empower Adolescent Girls described in section
14 6; and

15 (B) the United States Government Strat-
16 egy on International Basic Education, including
17 its objective to expand access to quality basic
18 education for all, particularly marginalized and
19 vulnerable populations.

20 (d) ACCEPTANCE OF SOLICITATIONS FOR AWARDS.—
21 The Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
22 national Development shall seek to accept solicitations for
23 one or more awards, pursuant to the authority in sub-
24 section (a), to conduct activities under this section begin-

1 ning not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
2 ment of this Act.

3 (e) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—The Adminis-
4 trator of the United States Agency for International De-
5 velopment shall seek to ensure that activities carried out
6 under this section—

7 (1) employ rigorous monitoring and evaluation
8 methodologies, including ex-post evaluation, to en-
9 sure that such activities demonstrably close the gap
10 in gender parity for secondary education and im-
11 prove the quality of education offered to adolescent
12 girls;

13 (2) disaggregate all data collected and reported
14 by age, gender, marital and motherhood status, dis-
15 ability, and urbanity, to the extent practicable and
16 appropriate;

17 (3) adhere to the Policy Guidance on Promoting
18 Gender Equality of the Department of State and the
19 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy
20 of the United States Agency for International Devel-
21 opment; and

22 (4) use, to the extent possible, indicators and
23 methodologies identified by the Interagency Working
24 Group for the Strategy on International Basic Edu-
25 cation.

1 **SEC. 6. GLOBAL STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
3 date of the enactment of this Act, and every 5 years there-
4 after for not less than 10 years, the Ambassador-at-Large
5 for Global Women’s Issues at the Department of State,
6 in consultation with the Senior Coordinator for Gender
7 Equality and Women’s Empowerment and the Senior Co-
8 ordinator for International Basic Education Assistance at
9 the United States Agency for International Development,
10 shall—

11 (1) review and update a United States global
12 strategy to empower adolescent girls;

13 (2) provide a meaningful opportunity for public
14 review and consultation on the strategy; and

15 (3) submit the strategy to the appropriate con-
16 gressional committees.

17 (b) INITIAL STRATEGY.—For the purposes of this
18 section, the “United States Global Strategy to Empower
19 Adolescent Girls”, published in March 2016, shall be
20 deemed to fulfill the initial requirement under subsection
21 (a).

22 (c) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—In reviewing and
23 updating the strategy under subsection (a), the Amba-
24 sador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues, the Senior Co-
25 ordinator for Gender Equality and Women’s Empower-

1 ment, and the Senior Coordinator for International Basic
2 Education Assistance shall, as appropriate, consult with—

3 (1) the heads of relevant Federal departments
4 and agencies their designees, as well as experts on
5 adolescent girls, gender equality, and empowerment
6 issues throughout the Federal Government;

7 (2) the appropriate congressional committees;

8 (3) representatives of United States civil society
9 and multilateral organizations with demonstrated ex-
10 perience and expertise in empowering adolescent
11 girls or promoting gender equality, including local
12 civil society organizations and beneficiaries where
13 possible; and

14 (4) local organizations and beneficiaries in
15 countries receiving assistance pursuant to the strat-
16 egy, including youth and adolescent girls' organiza-
17 tions.

18 **SEC. 7. TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING TO CONGRESS.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
20 date of the enactment of this Act, and biennially thereafter
21 for 10 years until each activity initiated pursuant to the
22 authorities under this Act has concluded, the Adminis-
23 trator of the United States Agency for International De-
24 velopment, in coordination with the Secretary of State,

1 shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees
2 a report describing—

3 (1) the activities initiated under the authorities
4 provided in this Act; and

5 (2) the manner and extent to which such activi-
6 ties are monitored and evaluated, in accordance with
7 section 5(e).

8 (b) AVAILABILITY.—The report required by sub-
9 section (a) shall be made available on a text-based, search-
10 able, and publicly available website of the United States
11 Agency for International Development.

 Passed the House of Representatives January 28,
2020.

Attest:

Clerk.

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