

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To support empowerment, economic security, and educational opportunities
for adolescent girls around the world, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) introduced the following
bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

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,*

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

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

6 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
7 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.

1 **SEC. 2. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-**
2 **FINED.**

3 In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional com-
4 mittees” means—

5 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
6 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
7 resentatives; and

8 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
9 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

10 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

11 Congress finds the following:

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

15 (2) Adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable
16 to HIV/AIDS, child, early and forced marriage, and
17 other forms of violence which are detrimental to
18 their futures, as evidenced by the following statistics:

19 (A) Each year, 380,000 adolescent girls
20 and young women become newly infected with
21 HIV, more than 1,000 every day, and comprise
22 the fastest-growing demographic for new infec-
23 tions in sub-Saharan Africa.

1 (B) Each year, 12,000,000 adolescent girls
2 around the world are married before their 18th
3 birthday, and more than 650,000,000 women
4 alive today were married as children.

5 (C) Child marriages often interrupt school-
6 ing, limit opportunities, and impact the phys-
7 ical, psychological and social well-being of such
8 girls. If there is no reduction in child marriage,
9 the global number of women married as chil-
10 dren is projected to increase by 150,000,000 by
11 2030.

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

17 (3) Approximately 130,000,000 girls around the
18 world are not in school, and millions more are failing
19 to acquire basic reading, writing, and numeracy
20 skills.

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

24 (5) Due to discriminatory gender norms and ex-
25 pectations, disparities in access to safe and quality

1 education manifest early in a girl's life and continue
2 to become more pronounced throughout adolescence.

3 (6) Girls living with disabilities are less likely to
4 start school and transition to secondary school than
5 boys living with disabilities and other children, and
6 just 1 percent of women with disabilities are literate
7 globally.

8 (7) While two-thirds of all countries have
9 achieved gender parity in primary education, only 40
10 percent have achieved gender parity in secondary
11 education.

12 (8) Adolescent girls who remain in school are
13 more likely to live longer, marry later, have healthier
14 children, and, as adults, earn an income to support
15 their families, thereby contributing to the economic
16 advancement of communities and nations.

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

24 (10) The United States Global Strategy to Em-
25 power Adolescent Girls, published in March 2016,

1 has brought together the Department of State, the
2 United States Agency for International Develop-
3 ment, the Peace Corps, and the Millennium Chal-
4 lenge Corporation, as well as other agencies and pro-
5 grams such as the President’s Emergency Fund for
6 AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), to address the range of
7 challenges preventing adolescent girls from attaining
8 an inclusive and equitable quality education leading
9 to relevant learning outcomes.

10 (11) According to the United States Global
11 Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls, which is the
12 first foreign policy document in the world solely
13 dedicated to the rights and empowerment of girls
14 globally, “[w]hile the Millennium Development Goals
15 improved outcomes for girls in primary education,
16 they also highlighted the need for a targeted focus
17 on adolescents and young adults, particularly re-
18 garding the transition to and completion of sec-
19 ondary school”.

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

1 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

2 It is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) every child, regardless of place of birth, de-
4 serves an equal opportunity to access quality edu-
5 cation;

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

10 (3) gains with respect to girls' secondary edu-
11 cation and empowerment have been proven to cor-
12 relate strongly with progress in gender equality and
13 women's rights, as well as economic and social
14 progress, and achieving gender equality should be a
15 priority goal of United States foreign policy;

16 (4) achieving gender parity in both access to
17 and quality of educational opportunity contributes
18 significantly to economic growth and development,
19 thereby lowering the risk for violence and instability;
20 and

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

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

25 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Administrator of the United
26 States Agency for International Development may enter

1 into acquisition, assistance, or results-based financing
2 agreements, including agreements combining more than
3 one such feature, for activities addressing the barriers de-
4 scribed in subsection (b) that adolescent girls face in ac-
5 cessing a quality secondary education. Such activities
6 shall—

7 (1) set outcome-based targets to demonstrate
8 qualitative gains;

9 (2) use existing United States Government
10 strategies and frameworks relevant to international
11 basic education and gender equality, including evi-
12 dence-based interventions, to—

13 (A) integrate new technologies and ap-
14 proaches, including to establish or continue
15 public-private partnerships or to pilot the use of
16 development impact bonds (the results of which
17 are verified by an independent evaluation);

18 (B) to the greatest extent possible, apply
19 quasi-experimental and scientific, research-
20 based approaches;

21 (C) promote inclusive, equitable and sus-
22 tainable educational achievement; and

23 (D) support a responsible transition to
24 education systems that are sustainably financed
25 by domestic governments; and

1 (3) ensure that schools provide safe and quality
2 educational opportunities and create empowering en-
3 vironments, so that girls can enroll in and regularly
4 attend school, successfully transition from primary
5 to secondary school, and eventually graduate having
6 achieved learning outcomes and positioned to make
7 healthy transitions into adulthood.

8 (b) SPECIFIC BARRIERS.—The barriers described in
9 this subsection include—

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

1 (13) discrimination based on religious or ethnic
2 identity; and

3 (14) heavy workload due to household tasks.

4 (c) COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—The United States Agency
6 for International Development Senior Coordinator
7 for International Basic Education Assistance, in co-
8 ordination with the United States Agency for Inter-
9 national Development Senior Coordinator for Gender
10 Equality and Women’s Empowerment and the Am-
11 bassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues at the
12 Department of State, shall be responsible for the
13 oversight and coordination of all activities of the
14 United States Government carried out under this
15 section.

16 (2) DEVELOPMENT OF AGREEMENTS.—In the
17 development of results-based financing agreements
18 described in subsection (a), the Senior Coordinators
19 shall consult with the United States Agency for
20 International Development Innovation, Technology,
21 and Research Hub or any successor center that is
22 responsible for developing innovative tools and ap-
23 proaches to accelerate development impact.

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

4 (A) the United States Global Strategy to
5 Empower Adolescent Girls described in section
6 6; and

7 (B) the United States Government Strat-
8 egy on International Basic Education, including
9 its objective to expand access to quality basic
10 education for all, particularly marginalized and
11 vulnerable populations.

12 (d) ACCEPTANCE OF SOLICITATIONS FOR AWARDS.—
13 The Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
14 national Development shall seek to accept solicitations for
15 one or more awards, pursuant to the authority in sub-
16 section (a), to conduct activities under this section begin-
17 ning not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act.

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

23 (1) employ rigorous monitoring and evaluation
24 methodologies, including ex-post evaluation, to en-
25 sure that such activities demonstrably close the gap

1 in gender parity for secondary education and im-
2 prove the quality of education offered to adolescent
3 girls;

4 (2) disaggregate all data collected and reported
5 by age, gender, marital and motherhood status, dis-
6 ability, and urbanity, to the extent practicable and
7 appropriate;

8 (3) adhere to the Policy Guidance on Promoting
9 Gender Equality of the Department of State and the
10 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy
11 of the United States Agency for International Devel-
12 opment; and

13 (4) use, to the extent possible, indicators and
14 methodologies identified by the Interagency Working
15 Group for the Strategy on International Basic Edu-
16 cation.

17 **SEC. 6. GLOBAL STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
19 date of the enactment of this Act, and every 5 years there-
20 after, the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s
21 Issues at the Department of State, in consultation with
22 the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women’s
23 Empowerment and the Senior Coordinator for Inter-
24 national Basic Education Assistance at the United States
25 Agency for International Development, shall—

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

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

5 (3) submit the strategy to the appropriate con-
6 gressional committees.

7 (b) INITIAL STRATEGY.—For the purposes of this
8 section, the “United States Global Strategy to Empower
9 Adolescent Girls”, published in March 2016, shall be
10 deemed to fulfill the initial requirement under subsection
11 (a).

12 (c) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—In reviewing and
13 updating the strategy under subsection (a), the Amba-
14 sador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues, the Senior Co-
15 ordinator for Gender Equality and Women’s Empower-
16 ment, and the Senior Coordinator for International Basic
17 Education Assistance shall consult with—

18 (1) the heads of relevant Federal departments
19 and agencies their designees, as well as experts on
20 adolescent girls, gender equality, and empowerment
21 issues throughout the Federal Government;

22 (2) the appropriate congressional committees;

23 (3) representatives of United States civil society
24 and multilateral organizations with demonstrated ex-
25 perience and expertise in empowering adolescent

1 girls or promoting gender equality, including local
2 civil society organizations and beneficiaries where
3 possible; and

4 (4) local organizations and beneficiaries in
5 countries receiving assistance pursuant to the strat-
6 egy, including youth and adolescent girls' organiza-
7 tions.

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

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the
10 date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days
11 thereafter until each activity initiated pursuant to the au-
12 thorities under this Act has concluded, the Administrator
13 of the United States Agency for International Develop-
14 ment, in coordination with the Secretary of State, shall
15 submit to the appropriate congressional committees a re-
16 port describing—

17 (1) the activities initiated under the authorities
18 provided in this Act; and

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

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