

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1354

To authorize grants to promote media literacy and youth empowerment programs, to authorize research on the role and impact of depictions of girls and women in the media, to provide for the establishment of a National Task Force on Girls and Women in the Media, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 13, 2011

Mrs. HAGAN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To authorize grants to promote media literacy and youth empowerment programs, to authorize research on the role and impact of depictions of girls and women in the media, to provide for the establishment of a National Task Force on Girls and Women in the Media, 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 (a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Healthy Media for Youth Act”.

1 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of
2 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.

Sec. 2. Findings.

Sec. 3. Grants to promote media literacy and youth empowerment programs.

Sec. 4. Research on the role and impact of girls and women in the media on
the development of youth.

Sec. 5. National Task Force on Girls and Women in the Media.

Sec. 6. Limitation.

Sec. 7. Definitions.

Sec. 8. Authorization of appropriations.

3 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

5 (1) According to the 2010 study by the Kaiser
6 Family Foundation entitled “Generation M² Media
7 in Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds”, most 8- to 18-year-
8 olds spend about 10 hours a day using recreational
9 media.

10 (2) Sixty percent of teenage girls compare their
11 bodies to fashion models and almost 90 percent of
12 girls say the media places a lot of pressure on teen-
13 age girls to be thin, according to the 2010 Girl
14 Scout Research Institute report entitled “Beauty
15 Redefined”.

16 (3) Only 34 percent of girls report being very
17 satisfied with their bodies, according to the 2006
18 study by the Girl Scout Research Institute entitled
19 “The New Normal? What Girls Say About Healthy
20 Living”. Body dissatisfaction can lead to unhealthy
21 eating and dieting habits. Fifty-five percent of girls

1 admit that they diet to lose weight, 37 percent know
2 someone who has been diagnosed with an eating dis-
3 order, and 31 percent admit to starving themselves
4 or refusing to eat as a strategy to lose weight.

5 (4) Fifty-four percent of young girls in grades
6 3 through 5 worry about their appearance, and 37
7 percent of such girls worry specifically about their
8 weight, according to the 2006 Girls Inc. report enti-
9 tled “The Supergirl Dilemma: Girls Grapple with
10 the Mounting Pressure of Expectations”.

11 (5) A 2007 report of the American Psycho-
12 logical Association’s Task Force on the Sexualization
13 of Girls reported that 3 of the most common mental
14 health problems among girls, eating disorders, de-
15 pression or depressed mood, and low self-esteem, are
16 linked to sexualization of girls and women in media.

17 (6) Sexualized messages and images of girls
18 and women can also negatively impact boys. Accord-
19 ing to the 2007 report of the American Psycho-
20 logical Association’s Task Force on the Sexualization
21 of Girls, frequent exposure to sexualized media im-
22 ages of girls and women can create unrealistic and
23 unhealthy expectations of girls’ and women’s phys-
24 ical appearance for boys, and may impair their abil-

1 ity to develop healthy relationships with girls and
2 women.

3 (7) Girls and women of color are disproportion-
4 ately absent from mainstream media. The Girl Scout
5 Research Institute report, “Beauty Redefined”,
6 states that only 32 percent of African-American girls
7 think the fashion industry does a good job of rep-
8 resenting people of all races and ethnicities.

9 (8) Women and girls continue to be underrep-
10 resented in leadership roles in children’s media. The
11 Geena Davis Institute on Gender in the Media re-
12 ports that less than 1 in 3 speaking characters in
13 children’s movies are female, and that the majority
14 of female characters in children’s movies are praised
15 for their appearance or physical beauty rather than
16 their personality, intelligence, or other talents.

17 (9) Congress supports efforts to ensure that
18 youth improve their media literacy skills, and to pro-
19 mote positive messages about girls and women that
20 highlight healthy and diverse body images, positive
21 and active female role models, and equal and healthy
22 relationships between female and male characters.

23 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO PROMOTE MEDIA LITERACY AND**
24 **YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS.**

25 (a) MEDIA LITERACY.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
2 grants to nonprofit organizations to provide for the
3 establishment, operation, coordination, and evalua-
4 tion of programs to increase the media literacy of
5 girls and boys, including by—

6 (A) educating youth on how to apply crit-
7 ical thinking skills when consuming media im-
8 ages and messages;

9 (B) encouraging youth to consume healthy,
10 balanced, and positive media depictions of girls
11 and women; and

12 (C) raising awareness about the perpetua-
13 tion and damaging effects of unhealthy images
14 of girls and women, gender stereotypes, and the
15 sexualization of girls and women.

16 (2) ACTIVITIES.—Programs funded under this
17 subsection may include—

18 (A) programs designed to encourage youth
19 to develop analytical skills that promote auton-
20 omy and critical understanding of how girls and
21 women are depicted in the media;

22 (B) age-appropriate education about how
23 the sexualization of girls and women,
24 stereotypical gender roles, and unhealthy im-
25 ages of girls and women can affect the body

1 image of youth, the choice of role models by
2 youth, and relationships of youth among their
3 peers;

4 (C) programs designed to provide youth
5 the skills to take responsibility for their use of
6 media;

7 (D) education on career opportunities
8 within the media;

9 (E) programs designed to teach youth how
10 to create and use media to contribute to social
11 change, especially in their communities;

12 (F) education for parents, educators, and
13 other adults on how depictions of girls and
14 women in the media impact youth; or

15 (G) support for public or private partner-
16 ships that encourage businesses, advertisers,
17 the entertainment industry, and other media
18 content providers to promote media content
19 that—

20 (i) encourages healthy body images;

21 (ii) depicts positive and active female
22 role models; and

23 (iii) portrays equal and healthy rela-
24 tionships between female and male char-
25 acters.

1 (3) REPORT.—The Secretary shall require each
2 grant recipient under this subsection to submit to
3 the Secretary a report for each grant period that—

4 (A) describes how grant funds were used;

5 and

6 (B) evaluates the effectiveness of the pro-
7 gram funded through the grant.

8 (b) YOUTH EMPOWERMENT.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
10 grants to nonprofit organizations to provide for the
11 establishment, operation, coordination, and evalua-
12 tion of programs to support the empowerment of
13 girls or boys in a variety of ways, including by en-
14 couraging youth empowerment through extra-
15 curricular activities and programs that—

16 (A) develop self-esteem, skills, and talents;

17 and

18 (B) celebrate characteristics unrelated to
19 physical appearance, such as leadership and
20 self-esteem.

21 (2) ACTIVITIES.—Programs funded under this
22 subsection may include programs designed to—

23 (A) build confidence, self-efficacy, and
24 leadership skills of youth in single gender envi-
25 ronments;

1 (B) develop values and skills of youth such
2 as respect, critical thinking, problem solving,
3 and collaborative team work; or

4 (C) facilitate opportunities for youth to
5 interact with adult role models, such as mentors
6 and volunteers, in their communities.

7 (3) REPORT.—The Secretary shall require each
8 grant recipient under this subsection to submit to
9 the Secretary a report for each grant period that—

10 (A) describes how grant funds were used;

11 and

12 (B) evaluates the effectiveness of the pro-
13 gram funded through the grant.

14 (c) MATCHING FUNDS.—The Secretary may make a
15 grant to a nonprofit organization under subsection (a) or
16 (b) only if the organization agrees to make available non-
17 Federal contributions toward the costs of the program for
18 which such organization receives a grant in an amount
19 that is not less than \$1 for every \$5 of Federal funds
20 awarded under this section. Such contribution may be in
21 cash or in-kind, fairly evaluated, including equipment,
22 training, curricula, or a preexisting evaluation framework.

23 (d) AWARD AMOUNTS.—No grant awarded under this
24 section shall be greater than \$1,000,000 or less than
25 \$100,000.

1 (e) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
2 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to nonprofit organi-
3 zations or projects that are—

4 (1) focused on underserved communities and
5 groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, rep-
6 resentatives from different socioeconomic groups,
7 and youth at risk for eating disorders;

8 (2) gender-specific;

9 (3) culturally competent;

10 (4) developed in collaboration with subject mat-
11 ter experts, community leaders, or youth serving or-
12 ganizations; and

13 (5) have demonstrated expertise in providing
14 training and evaluation of quality media literacy ac-
15 tivities or youth empowerment programs.

16 (f) CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS.—A grant may be made
17 under subsection (a) or (b) only if the applicant involved
18 agrees to the following:

19 (1) Not more than 20 percent of the grant
20 funds will be used for administration, accounting, re-
21 porting, and program oversight functions.

22 (2) The grant will be used to supplement and
23 not supplant funds from other sources for increasing
24 the media literacy of, and empowering, youth.

1 (3) The applicant will abide by any limitations
2 deemed appropriate by the Secretary on any charges
3 to individuals receiving services pursuant to the
4 grant. As deemed appropriate by the Secretary, such
5 limitations on charges may vary based on the finan-
6 cial circumstances of the individual receiving serv-
7 ices.

8 (g) GRANT PERIOD; APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE
9 DURING SUBSEQUENT GRANT YEARS.—

10 (1) GRANT PERIOD.—A grant awarded under
11 this section shall be for a period of 3 years.

12 (2) APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE DURING
13 SUBSEQUENT GRANT YEARS.—After the first fiscal
14 year for which an entity receives a grant, the entity
15 shall apply to receive grant funds for a subsequent
16 fiscal year during the grant period by submitting an
17 application to the Secretary at the beginning of each
18 such fiscal year. An application submitted under this
19 paragraph shall include such information as the Sec-
20 retary may require, including, at a minimum, a de-
21 scription of the progress of the entity.

22 (h) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
23 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the
24 Secretary shall prepare and submit to the appropriate

1 committees of the Congress a report on the grants award-
2 ed under subsections (a) and (b), including—

- 3 (1) a description of how the grant funds were
4 used; and
5 (2) an evaluation of the effectiveness of such
6 grants.

7 **SEC. 4. RESEARCH ON THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF GIRLS**
8 **AND WOMEN IN THE MEDIA ON THE DEVEL-**
9 **OPMENT OF YOUTH.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the
11 Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Preven-
12 tion and in coordination with the Director of the National
13 Institutes of Health and the Director of the Eunice Ken-
14 nedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and
15 Human Development, shall review, synthesize, conduct, or
16 support research on the role and impact depictions of girls
17 and women in the media have on youth in the following
18 areas:

19 (1) The psychological, physical, sexual, and
20 interpersonal development of youth in the following
21 areas:

22 (A) Cognitive areas such as mental health,
23 self-esteem, learning abilities, and problem solv-
24 ing skills.

1 (B) Physical areas such as diet, nutrition,
2 exercise, body image, substance abuse, and
3 sleeping and eating routines.

4 (C) Social behavioral areas such as rela-
5 tionships with peers, interactions with parents
6 and family members, aggression, high-risk be-
7 haviors, sexual behavior and development, and
8 positive social behaviors.

9 (D) Academic performance.

10 (E) The perceptions and attitudes of youth
11 about the abilities, equity, appearances, and
12 leadership potential of girls and boys.

13 (2) How the effects of depictions in the media
14 of girls and women vary from such depictions of
15 boys and men, and by race, ethnicity, and age group.

16 (3) How the sexualization and objectification of
17 girls and women in media affects the healthy devel-
18 opment of girls and boys.

19 (4) How food marketing and obesity campaigns
20 affect the body image, nutrition, and exercise of girls
21 and of boys, especially among youth with eating-dis-
22 orders.

23 (5) Additional areas as designated by the Sec-
24 retary.

1 (b) NO DUPLICATION.—The Secretary shall ensure
2 that research activities under this section do not duplicate
3 other Federal research activities.

4 (c) REPORTS.—Not later than 2 years after the date
5 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the
6 Secretary shall prepare and submit to the appropriate
7 committees of the Congress a report that—

8 (1) synthesizes the results of—

9 (A) research under this section; and

10 (B) other related research by the private
11 or public sector, including the Federal Govern-
12 ment;

13 (2) disaggregates such results by gender, race,
14 age, and socioeconomic background;

15 (3) includes a compendium of key existing re-
16 search on the role and impact of depictions of girls
17 and women in the media;

18 (4) outlines gaps in research on the role and
19 impact of depictions of girl and women in the media
20 and identifies areas where future research is needed;
21 and

22 (5) identifies how factors such as the format of
23 media, length of exposure to media, age of youth,
24 and nature of parental involvement impact such re-
25 sults.

1 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON GIRLS AND WOMEN IN**
2 **THE MEDIA.**

3 (a) **PURPOSES.**—The Federal Communications Com-
4 mission shall convene a task force, to be known as the
5 National Task Force on Girls and Women in the Media,
6 to develop voluntary steps and goals for promoting healthy
7 and positive depictions of girls and women in the media
8 for the benefit of all youth.

9 (b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The Task Force shall include
10 representatives of the media industry, nonprofit and
11 youth-serving organizations, academia and research enti-
12 ties, psychologists and other child health professionals,
13 Federal agencies, and any other public or private entity
14 designated by the Federal Communications Commission.

15 (c) **RESPONSIBILITIES.**—The Task Force shall iden-
16 tify—

17 (1) trends with respect to how the media regu-
18 lated by the Federal Communications Commission
19 portrays girls and women;

20 (2) how such trends impact the healthy growth
21 and development of youth; and

22 (3) voluntary measures and goals that the pub-
23 lic and private sectors can develop to promote
24 healthy and positive media depictions of girls and
25 women for the benefit of all youth.

1 (d) INITIAL MEETING.—The Federal Communica-
2 tions Commission shall ensure that the Task Force holds
3 its first meeting not later than 90 days after the date of
4 the enactment of this Act.

5 (e) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
6 of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Federal Com-
7 munications Commission shall submit a report to Con-
8 gress that contains—

9 (1) the findings of the Task Force under sub-
10 section (c); and

11 (2) recommendations for areas of improvement
12 regarding depictions of girls and women in the
13 media.

14 **SEC. 6. LIMITATION.**

15 Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the
16 Secretary may not use amounts made available under this
17 Act to conduct or support activities or programs that are
18 duplicative of activities or programs otherwise carried out
19 through the Department of Health and Human Services
20 or the Department of Education.

21 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

22 In this Act:

23 (1) The term “media” includes television pro-
24 grams, motion pictures, video games, music and
25 music videos, the Internet, social media, digital video

1 recorders, cell phones, magazines, newspapers,
2 books, advertisements, and other emerging tech-
3 nologies designed for communication, entertainment,
4 education, or information.

5 (2) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary
6 of Health and Human Services.

7 (3) The term “sexualization” means a cir-
8 cumstance when—

9 (A) a person’s value comes only from his
10 or her sexual appeal or behavior, to the exclu-
11 sion of other characteristics;

12 (B) a person is held to a standard that
13 equates physical attractiveness (narrowly de-
14 fined) and personal value with appearing, act-
15 ing, and being sexy;

16 (C) a person is sexually objectified, or
17 made into a thing for others’ sexual use, rather
18 than seen as a person with the capacity for
19 independent action and decisionmaking; or

20 (D) sexuality is inappropriately imposed
21 upon a person.

22 (4) The term “Task Force” means the National
23 Task Force on Girls and Women in the Media con-
24 vened under section 5.

1 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 For the purpose of carrying out sections 3 and 4,
3 there are authorized to be appropriated, in addition to any
4 other amounts available for such purpose—

5 (1) \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2012, of which—

6 (A) \$2,000,000 shall be allocated to the
7 program under section 3(a);

8 (B) \$2,000,000 shall be allocated to the
9 program under section 3(b); and

10 (C) \$1,000,000 shall be allocated to the
11 program under section 4; and

12 (2) \$2,000,000 for each fiscal years 2013
13 through 2016, of which—

14 (A) \$500,000 shall be allocated to the pro-
15 gram under section 3(a);

16 (B) \$500,000 shall be allocated to the pro-
17 gram under section 3(b); and

18 (C) \$1,000,000 shall be allocated to the
19 program under section 4.

○