

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5735

To authorize the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to prioritize efforts to support access to primary and secondary education for displaced children, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 12, 2016

Mr. CHABOT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to prioritize efforts to support access to primary and secondary education for displaced children, 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 This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Girls’ Ac-
5 cess to Education in Vulnerable Settings Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The number of people displaced by conflict
2 in 2016 is the highest since the end of the Second
3 World War, at almost 60 million. Armed conflicts in
4 Iraq, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, the
5 Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic
6 of the Congo, Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan,
7 Ukraine, and many other countries have led to the
8 internal displacement of civilians as well as forcing
9 many people to become refugees or stateless.

10 (2) The majority of such displaced people, in-
11 cluding refugees and stateless people, are also sur-
12 vivors of human rights abuses, violence, and conflict.

13 (3) The United Nations High Commissioner for
14 Refugees has identified deprivation and discrimina-
15 tion as two root causes of the crisis of displaced peo-
16 ple. The causes of deprivation may include poor gov-
17 ernance, lack of access to the benefits of economic
18 development, regional dynamics and conflicts, urban-
19 ization, and political extremism. The discrimination
20 such people face may be based on race or ethnicity,
21 nationality, gender, beliefs, caste, or class.

22 (4) Half of the population of displaced people
23 is under the age of 18. One out of every four such
24 children does not receive either a primary or sec-
25 ondary education.

1 (5) Displaced people spend an average of 17
2 years away from their home countries. As a result,
3 displaced children may spend the entirety of their
4 childhoods in a foreign country, without access to
5 quality primary or secondary education.

6 (6) Although the global enrollment rate in sec-
7 ondary schools is 67 percent, among displaced chil-
8 dren, this rate is 36 percent.

9 (7) Education offers socioeconomic opportuni-
10 ties, psychological stability, and physical protection
11 for displaced people. Education also contributes to
12 the long-term livelihood of such people, ensuring
13 that displaced generations are able to rebuild their
14 lives and communities in their countries of asylum
15 or in their home countries.

16 (8) Each additional year of secondary education
17 completed by displaced people results in a ten per-
18 cent increase in earnings.

19 (9) Displaced children face many barriers to ac-
20 cessing educational services. Educational services
21 may not be accessible because such services are too
22 expensive, too far away, or located in areas too dan-
23 gerous to travel to daily. Even if a school is available
24 and sufficiently staffed, the school may not accom-
25 modate children who have missed years of schooling,

1 or who face linguistic or cultural barriers to assimilation.
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3 (10) Despite the development of recent conflicts
4 such as those in Syria and Somalia, humanitarian
5 aid for education has dropped. Less than two per-
6 cent of global emergency aid was directed toward
7 educational services in 2016.

8 (11) A lack of education among women and
9 girls can aggravate an otherwise reduced ability to
10 seek employment, participate in civil society, or pur-
11 chase or inherit land and other assets. In general,
12 girls who have received secondary education are up
13 to six times less likely to marry as minors, compared
14 to girls who have received little or no formal edu-
15 cation. Girls who are not attending primary or sec-
16 ondary schools are also disproportionately vulnerable
17 to human and sex trafficking and sexual violence.

18 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

19 It is the sense of Congress that it is critical to ensure
20 that children, particularly girls, displaced by conflicts
21 overseas are able to access educational services and receive
22 a quality education, and that the educational needs of
23 women and girls are considered in the design, implementa-
24 tion, and evaluation of United States foreign assistance
25 policies and programs.

1 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

2 It is the policy of the United States to—

3 (1) encourage other countries to support efforts
4 to ensure that displaced children have access to safe,
5 quality primary and secondary education;

6 (2) enhance training and capacity-building for
7 the governments of countries hosting displaced peo-
8 ple to design, implement, and monitor programs to
9 effectively address barriers to such education, in co-
10 ordination with—

11 (A) the United Nations, the World Bank,
12 and other international organizations;

13 (B) local and international nongovern-
14 mental organizations; and

15 (C) civil society organizations, including
16 faith-based organizations and organizations rep-
17 resenting parents and children;

18 (3) incorporate into the design and implementa-
19 tion of such programs measures to evaluate the im-
20 pact of the programs on girls, with respect to the re-
21 duction of child marriage, gender-based violence,
22 sexual and human trafficking, and forced labor; and

23 (4) coordinate with the governments of coun-
24 tries hosting displaced people to—

1 (A) promote the inclusion of displaced chil-
2 dren into the educational systems of such coun-
3 tries; and

4 (B) develop safe, quality primary and sec-
5 ondary educational opportunities in cir-
6 cumstances in which such inclusion is not pos-
7 sible or appropriate, including through fostering
8 innovative solutions such as schools that permit
9 more children to be educated by extending the
10 hours of schooling and expanding the number
11 of teachers.

12 **SEC. 5. UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT EDU-**
13 **CATIONAL SERVICES FOR DISPLACED CHIL-**
14 **DREN.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the
16 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
17 national Development are authorized to prioritize and ad-
18 vance ongoing efforts to support programs that—

19 (1) provide safe, quality primary and secondary
20 education for displaced children;

21 (2) build the capacity of institutions in coun-
22 tries hosting displaced people to prevent displaced
23 children from facing discrimination when accessing
24 safe, quality primary and secondary education; and

1 (3) help increase the access of displaced chil-
2 dren, especially displaced girls, to educational, eco-
3 nomic, and entrepreneurial opportunities, including
4 through the governmental authorities of such host
5 countries responsible for educational or youth serv-
6 ices.

7 (b) COORDINATION WITH MULTILATERAL ORGANI-
8 ZATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator are au-
9 thorized to coordinate with the World Bank, appropriate
10 agencies of the United Nations, and other relevant multi-
11 lateral organizations, to work with governments in other
12 countries to enact, implement, and enforce programs and
13 policies that specifically collect data disaggregated by sex
14 and age on displaced people.

15 (c) COORDINATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR AND
16 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary and the
17 Administrator are authorized to work with private sector
18 and civil society organizations, in the United States and
19 internationally, to promote safe, quality primary and sec-
20 ondary education for displaced children.

21 **SEC. 6. REPORT.**

22 During the five-year period beginning on the date of
23 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Adminis-
24 trator shall include in any report or evaluation submitted

1 to Congress related to a foreign assistance program the
2 following information:

3 (1) To the extent practicable, a breakdown of
4 the beneficiaries of such program by location, age,
5 gender, marital status, and school enrollment status.

6 (2) A description of how such program benefits
7 displaced people.

8 (3) A description of any primary or secondary
9 educational services supported by such program that
10 specifically address the needs of displaced girls.

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