

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1573

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 16, 2001

Referred to the Committee on International Relations

AN ACT

To authorize the provision of educational and health care assistance to the women and children of Afghanistan.

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 “Afghan Women and
5 Children Relief Act of 2001”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress makes the following findings:

3 (1) In Afghanistan, Taliban restrictions on
4 women's participation in society make it nearly im-
5 possible for women to exercise their basic human
6 rights. The Taliban restrictions on Afghan women's
7 freedom of expression, association, and movement
8 deny women full participation in society and, con-
9 sequently, from effectively securing basic access to
10 work, education, and health care.

11 (2) Afghanistan has one of the highest infant
12 (165 of 1000) and child (257 of 1000) mortality
13 rates in the world.

14 (3) Only 5 percent of rural and 39 percent of
15 urban Afghans have access to safe drinking water.

16 (4) It is estimated that 42 percent of all deaths
17 in Afghanistan are due to diarrheal diseases caused
18 by contaminated food and water.

19 (5) Over one-third of Afghan children under 5
20 years of age suffer from malnutrition, 85,000 of
21 whom die annually.

22 (6) Seventy percent of the health care system in
23 Afghanistan is dependent on foreign assistance.

24 (7) As of May 1998, only 20 percent of hospital
25 medical and surgical beds dedicated to adults were

1 available for women, and thousands of Afghan
2 women and girls are routinely denied health care.

3 (8) Women are forbidden to leave their homes
4 without being escorted by a male relative. This pre-
5 vents many women from seeking basic necessities
6 like health care and food for their children. Doctors,
7 virtually all of whom are male, are also not per-
8 mitted to provide certain types of care not deemed
9 appropriate by the Taliban.

10 (9) Before the Taliban took control of Kabul,
11 schools were coeducational, with women accounting
12 for 70 percent of the teaching force. Women rep-
13 resented about 50 percent of the civil service corps,
14 and 40 percent of the city's physicians were women.
15 Today, the Taliban prohibits women from working
16 as teachers, doctors, and in any other occupation.

17 (10) The Taliban prohibit girls and women
18 from attending school. In 1998, the Taliban ordered
19 the closing of more than 100 privately funded
20 schools where thousands of young women and girls
21 were receiving education and training in skills that
22 would have helped them support themselves and
23 their families.

24 (11) Of the many tens of thousands of war wid-
25 ows in Afghanistan, many are forced to beg for food

1 and to sell their possessions because they are not al-
2 lowed to work.

3 (12) Resistance movements courageously con-
4 tinue to educate Afghan girls in secrecy and in for-
5 eign countries against Taliban law.

6 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF ASSISTANCE.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the
8 President is authorized, on such terms and conditions as
9 the President may determine, to provide educational and
10 health care assistance for the women and children living
11 in Afghanistan and as refugees in neighboring countries.

12 (b) IMPLEMENTATION.—(1) In providing assistance
13 under subsection (a), the President shall ensure that such
14 assistance is provided in a manner that protects and pro-
15 motes the human rights of all people in Afghanistan, uti-
16 lizing indigenous institutions and nongovernmental orga-
17 nizations, especially women’s organizations, to the extent
18 possible.

19 (2) Beginning 6 months after the date of enactment
20 of this Act, and at least annually for the 2 years there-
21 after, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the
22 Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on For-
23 eign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Appro-
24 priations and the Committee on International Relations
25 of the House of Representatives describing the activities

1 carried out under this Act and otherwise describing the
2 condition and status of women and children in Afghani-
3 stan and the persons in refugee camps while United States
4 aid is given to displaced Afghans.

5 (c) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Funds made available
6 under the 2001 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations
7 Act for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks
8 on the United States (Public Law 107–38), shall be avail-
9 able to carry out this Act.

Passed the Senate November 15, 2001.

Attest:

JERI THOMSON,
Secretary.