

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3304

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 15, 2001

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

A BILL

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”.

6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) In Afghanistan, Taliban restrictions on
9 women’s participation in society made it nearly im-
10 possible for women to exercise their basic human

1 rights. The Taliban restrictions on Afghan women's
2 freedom of expression, association, and movement
3 denied women full participation in society and, con-
4 sequently, from effectively securing basic access to
5 work, education, and health care.

6 (2) Afghanistan has one of the highest infant
7 (165 of 1000) and child (257 of 1000) mortality
8 rates in the world.

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

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

14 (5) Over one-third of Afghan children under 5
15 years of age suffer from malnutrition, 85,000 of
16 whom die annually.

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

19 (7) As of May 1998, only 20 percent of hospital
20 medical and surgical beds dedicated to adults were
21 available for women, and thousands of Afghan
22 women and girls are routinely denied health care.

23 (8) Under the Taliban regime, women were for-
24 bidden to leave their homes without being escorted
25 by a male relative. This prevented many women

1 from seeking basic necessities like health care and
2 food for their children. Doctors, virtually all of
3 whom are male, were also not permitted to provide
4 certain types of care not deemed appropriate by the
5 Taliban.

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

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

20 (11) Of the many tens of thousands of war wid-
21 ows in Afghanistan, many are forced to beg for food
22 and to sell their possessions because they are not al-
23 lowed to work.

(12) Resistance movements courageously continued to educate Afghan girls in secrecy and in foreign countries against Taliban law.

4 SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF ASSISTANCE.

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

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

17 (2) Beginning 6 months after the date of enactment
18 of this Act, and at least annually for the 2 years there-
19 after, the President shall submit a report to the Com-
20 mittee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign
21 Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropria-
22 tions and the Committee on International Relations of the
23 House of Representatives describing the activities carried
24 out under this Act and otherwise describing the condition
25 and status of women and children in Afghanistan and the

1 persons in refugee camps while United States aid is given
2 to displaced Afghans.

3 (c) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts made avail-
4 able under Acts making appropriations for foreign oper-
5 ations, export financing, and other related programs for
6 fiscal years after fiscal year 2001 under “Child Survival
7 and Health Programs Fund”, “UNICEF”, “Immuniza-
8 tions”, “Safe Injections”, “Maternal Health, Medical
9 Equipment, Women in Development Fund”, “Children’s
10 Basic Education”, and “Refugee Assistance”, or other ap-
11 propriate programs, and amounts made available under
12 the 2001 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for
13 Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the
14 United States, shall be available to carry out this Act.

○