

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6521

To protect girls in developing countries through the prevention of child marriage, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 14, 2010

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MACK, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. INGLIS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. GALLEGLY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To protect girls in developing countries through the prevention of child marriage, 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 “International Preven-
5 tion of Child Marriage Act of 2010”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) child marriage is a violation of human
9 rights and the prevention and elimination of child

1 marriage should be a foreign policy goal of the
2 United States;

3 (2) the practice of child marriage undermines
4 United States investments in foreign assistance to
5 promote education and skills building for girls, re-
6 duce maternal and child mortality, reduce maternal
7 illness, halt the transmission of HIV/AIDS, prevent
8 gender-based violence, and reduce poverty; and

9 (3) educational opportunities for girls, economic
10 opportunities for women, and reducing maternal and
11 child mortality are critical to achieving the global
12 health and development objectives of the United
13 States, including efforts to prevent HIV/AIDS.

14 **SEC. 3. PREVENTION OF CHILD MARRIAGE IN DEVELOPING**
15 **COUNTRIES.**

16 (a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—The President, acting
17 through the Secretary of State, shall establish a multi-year
18 strategy to prevent child marriage in developing countries
19 and to promote the empowerment of girls at risk of child
20 marriage in developing countries.

21 (b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a),
22 the President shall—

23 (1) consult with Congress, relevant Federal de-
24 partments and agencies, and representatives of inde-
25 pendent civil society;

1 (2) focus on areas in developing countries with
2 high prevalence of child marriage; and

3 (3) encompass diplomatic initiatives between
4 the United States and governments of developing
5 countries, with attention to human rights, legal re-
6 forms and the rule of law, and programmatic initia-
7 tives in the areas of education, health, income gen-
8 eration, human rights, and democracy building.

9 (c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date
10 of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit
11 to Congress a report that includes—

12 (1) the specific steps taken to carry out sub-
13 section (a);

14 (2) an assessment, including data disaggregated
15 by age and sex to the extent possible, of current
16 United States-funded efforts to specifically prevent
17 child marriage in developing countries; and

18 (3) examples of best practices or programs to
19 prevent child marriage in developing countries that
20 could be replicated.

21 **SEC. 4. DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S COUNTRY REPORTS ON**
22 **HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES.**

23 The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is amended—

24 (1) in section 116 (22 U.S.C. 2151n), by add-
25 ing at the end the following new subsection:

1 “(g)(1) The report required by subsection (d) shall
 2 include for each country in which child marriage is preva-
 3 lent at a rate at or above 40 percent in at least one sub-
 4 national region of the country, a description of the status
 5 of the practice of child marriage in the country.

6 “(2) In this subsection, the term ‘child marriage’
 7 means the marriage of a girl or boy, not yet the minimum
 8 age for marriage stipulated in law in the country in which
 9 the girl or boy is a resident or, where there is no such
 10 law, under the age of 18.”; and

11 (2) in section 502B (22 U.S.C. 2304), by add-
 12 ing at the end the following new subsection:

13 “(j)(1) The report required by subsection (b) shall
 14 include for each country in which child marriage is preva-
 15 lent at a rate at or above 40 percent in at least one sub-
 16 national region of the country, a description of the status
 17 of the practice of child marriage in the country.

18 “(2) In this subsection, the term ‘child marriage’
 19 means the marriage of a girl or boy, not yet the minimum
 20 age for marriage stipulated in law in the country in which
 21 the girl or boy is a resident or, where there is no such
 22 law, under the age of 18.”.

23 **SEC. 5. CHILD MARRIAGE DEFINED.**

24 In this Act, the term “child marriage” means the
 25 marriage of a girl or boy, not yet the minimum age for

- 1 marriage stipulated in law in the country in which the girl
- 2 or boy is a resident or, where there is no such law, under
- 3 the age of 18.

