

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4508

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 4, 2020

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

AN ACT

To expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Malala Yousafzai
3 Scholarship Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress makes the following findings:

6 (1) In late 2008, Malala Yousafzai began mak-
7 ing the case for access to education for women and
8 girls despite objections from the Pakistani Taliban.
9 On October 9, 2012, Malala was shot in the head by
10 Pakistani Taliban on her way home from school.

11 (2) In 2013, Malala Yousafzai and her father
12 Ziauddin Yousafzai co-founded the Malala Fund.
13 The Malala Fund works to secure 12 years of free,
14 safe, and quality education for all girls. Completion
15 of a full 12-year cycle of primary and secondary edu-
16 cation ensures a pipeline of girls able to pursue
17 higher education.

18 (3) On July 12, 2013, Malala delivered a
19 speech before the United Nations General Assembly
20 calling for expanded access to education for women
21 and girls across the globe. She said, “[L]et us wage
22 a glorious struggle against illiteracy, poverty, and
23 terrorism. Let us pick up our books and our pens.
24 They are the most powerful weapons * * *. Edu-
25 cation is the only solution.”.

1 (4) On October 10, 2014, Malala Yousafzai be-
2 came the co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for
3 her “struggle against the suppression of children
4 and young people and for the right of all children to
5 education”.

6 (5) According to the United Nations 2016
7 Global Education Monitoring Report, more than 130
8 million girls worldwide are out of school. 15 million
9 girls of primary-school age will never enter a class-
10 room. As of 2016, at least 500 million adult women
11 across the globe are illiterate.

12 (6) According to the World Bank, “Girls’ edu-
13 cation is a strategic development priority. Better
14 educated women tend to be healthier, participate
15 more in the formal labor market, earn higher in-
16 comes, * * * marry at a later age, and enable better
17 health care and education for their children, should
18 they choose to become mothers. All these factors
19 combined can help lift households, communities, and
20 nations out of poverty.”.

21 (7) In 2015, all United Nations Member States,
22 including the United States, adopted quality edu-
23 cation, including access to higher education, and
24 gender equality as sustainable development goals to
25 be attained by 2030. One of the education goal tar-

1 gets is to “ensure equal access for all women and
2 men to affordable and quality technical, vocational
3 and tertiary education, including university”.

4 (8) In January 2010, Secretary of State Hillary
5 Rodham Clinton stated, “We will open the doors of
6 education to all citizens, but especially to girls and
7 women * * *. We are doing all of these things be-
8 cause we have seen that when women and girls have
9 the tools to stay healthy and the opportunity to con-
10 tribute to their families” well-being, they flourish
11 and so do the people around them.

12 (9) In February 2019, the White House
13 launched the Women’s Global Development and
14 Prosperity Initiative to advance women’s economic
15 empowerment across the globe and reach more than
16 100,000 women.

17 (10) The World Economic Forum ranks Paki-
18 stan the second lowest among all countries in the
19 world evaluated for gender equality. On educational
20 attainment for women, Pakistan is ranked the tenth
21 lowest.

22 (11) In Pakistan, the rate of higher education
23 enrollment beyond high school for girls and women
24 is just 9 percent as reported by the World Bank.
25 The global rate is 40 percent. Less than 6 percent

1 of women 25 and older in Pakistan attain a bach-
2 elor's degree or equivalent as of 2016.

3 (12) Factors such as poverty, early marriage,
4 disability, ethnicity, and religion can contribute to
5 the lack of educational opportunities for women in
6 marginalized communities.

7 (13) According to the World Bank, "Higher
8 education benefits both individuals and society. Eco-
9 nomic returns for college graduates are the highest
10 in the entire educational system—an average 17 per-
11 cent increase in earnings per year of schooling as
12 compared with 10 percent for primary school."

13 (14) The United States provides critical foreign
14 assistance to Pakistan's education sector to improve
15 access to and the quality of basic and higher edu-
16 cation. Since 2010, the United States Agency for
17 International Development (referred to in this Act
18 as "USAID") has awarded more than 6,000 scholar-
19 ships for young women to receive higher education
20 in Pakistan.

21 (15) The Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship
22 Program administered by USAID awards scholar-
23 ships to academically talented, financially needy
24 Pakistani students from all regions, including female
25 students from rural areas of the country, to pursue

1 bachelor's or master's degrees at participating Paki-
2 stani universities.

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

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that—

5 (1) every individual should have the opportunity
6 to pursue a full cycle of primary, secondary, and
7 higher education;

8 (2) every individual, regardless of gender, socio-
9 economic status, ethnicity, or religion should have
10 the opportunity to pursue an education without fear
11 of discrimination;

12 (3) educational exchanges promote institutional
13 linkages between the United States and Pakistan;
14 and

15 (4) recipients of scholarships referred to in sec-
16 tion 4 should commit to improving their local com-
17 munities.

18 (b) CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL INITIA-
19 TIVES IN PAKISTAN.—Congress encourages the Depart-
20 ment of State and USAID to continue their support for
21 initiatives led by the Government of Pakistan and civil so-
22 ciety that promote education in Pakistan, especially edu-
23 cation for women, in accordance with USAID's 2018 Edu-
24 cation Policy.

1 **SEC. 4. MERIT AND NEEDS-BASED SCHOLARSHIP PRO-**
2 **GRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The USAID Administrator shall
4 award at least 50 percent of the number of scholarships
5 under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program
6 (referred to in this Act as the “Program”) to women for
7 each of the calendar years 2020 through 2022.

8 (b) LIMITATIONS.—

9 (1) CRITERIA.—The scholarships available
10 under subsection (a) may only be awarded in accord-
11 ance with other scholarship eligibility criteria already
12 established by USAID.

13 (2) ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES.—Scholarships au-
14 thorized under subsection (a) shall be awarded for a
15 range of disciplines to improve the employability of
16 graduates and to meet the needs of the scholarship
17 recipients.

18 (3) OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS.—The USAID Ad-
19 ministrator shall make every effort to award 50 per-
20 cent of the scholarships available under the Program
21 to Pakistani women.

22 (c) LEVERAGING INVESTMENT.—The USAID Ad-
23 ministrator shall, to the greatest extent practicable, con-
24 sult with and leverage investments by the Pakistani pri-
25 vate sector and Pakistani diaspora communities in the
26 United States as part of USAID’s greater effort to im-

1 prove the quality of, expand access to, and ensure sustain-
2 ability of education programs in Pakistan.

3 **SEC. 5. ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The USAID Administrator shall
5 designate appropriate USAID officials to brief the appro-
6 priate congressional committees, not later than 1 year
7 after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually
8 thereafter for the next 3 years, on the implementation of
9 section 4.

10 (b) CONTENTS.—The briefing described in subsection
11 (a) shall include, among other relevant information, for
12 the most recently concluded fiscal year—

13 (1) the total number of scholarships that were
14 awarded through the Program, including a break-
15 down by gender;

16 (2) the disciplines of study chosen by the schol-
17 arship recipients;

18 (3) the percentage of the scholarships that were
19 awarded to students seeking a bachelor's degree or
20 a master's degree, respectively;

21 (4) the percentage of scholarship recipients who
22 voluntarily dropped out of school or were involun-
23 tarily pushed out of the program for failure to meet
24 program requirements; and

(5) the percentage of scholarship recipients who dropped out of school due to retaliation for seeking an education, to the extent that such information is available.

Passed the House of Representatives March 3,
2020.

Attest: **CHERYL L. JOHNSON,**
Clerk.