

111TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6521

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

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 14, 2010

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. ROHRBACHER, 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

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## 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.

