

Take Action! Ask Your Rep. to Cosponsor the Education for All Act of 2013

Around the world, 57 million primary school-aged children are still not in school. In addition, many more children who are in school are failing to acquire even basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills. The world has made steady progress toward universal education since 2000, but unless more effective policies are implemented and there is greater international financial support, 72 million children may still be out of school by 2015 – more than in 2008.¹ Millions more will receive a low-quality education and not be able to read, write, and count.

Achieving universal access to quality education is critical to fulfilling global development goals, breaking cycles of poverty, fostering economic growth, and promoting U.S. national security. In fact, if all students in low-income countries were to leave primary school with basic reading skills, 171 million people would be lifted out of poverty.² **A well-resourced, holistic U.S. global education strategy is needed now to ensure the U.S. government contributes to realizing universal access to quality education for all children around the world.**

To raise the issue with members of Congress and to raise access to education as a development priority, Reps. Nita Lowey (D-NY) and David Reichert (R-WA) have introduced H.R. 2780, known as the Education for All Act of 2013 (EFA Act). The bill calls on the U.S. to improve its global education policies, to ensure all children receive a quality basic education, and to support the Global Partnership for Education to achieve this goal. **Call and write your representative to cosponsor the Education for All Act.**

Call/Write to Your Representatives to Cosponsor about the Education for All Act

1. Introduce yourself as a RESULTS volunteer and a constituent. Acknowledge any actions that your member has already taken to support our work or other actions on poverty and thank him/her.
2. Inform your representative or aide that the [Education for All Act](#) (H.R. 2780) was introduced and is open for cosponsors.
3. **Sample Letter / Call Script:** I'm a constituent writing/calling to ask Representative_____ to cosponsor the Education for All Act, which is H.R. 2780. I'm very concerned that there are still 57 million kids still not in school around the world. The majority are girls, the poorest kids, and kids in conflict areas. And if something doesn't change, more children will be out of school in 2015 than today. All kids deserve the right to an education. Education strengthens families, communities, and countries by reducing poverty, increasing incomes, fighting HIV/AIDS, saving the lives of mothers – the list goes on and on. The bipartisan Education for All Act, introduced by Reps. Lowey and Reichert, seeks to improve U.S. policies so we can provide more robust support for powerful education initiatives like the Global Partnership for Education and more effectively get kids into school. Will you cosponsor the bipartisan Education for All Act?
4. Request a reply and include all of your contact information. If writing, please e-mail or send your letter to the local office. For office information: <http://capwiz.com/results/dbq/officials/>.

Why Support the Education for All Act?

The EFA Act (H.R. 2780) is a bipartisan bill that seeks to use existing U.S. funds for education in a more effective way. By ensuring U.S. basic education programs work to increase educational access for girls, children in conflict, and other marginalized children; improve the quality of education; and support partner countries to better implement their own education plans, the EFA Act will make our education dollars go further with more impact. The EFA Act also calls on the U.S. to support multilateral global education initiatives like the Global Partnership for Education, which will allow the U.S. to leverage our funds with other donors in a cost-effective way. As the only multilateral global partnership focused on ensuring all children have access to a quality education, the GPE has put 23 million children in school in countries around the world.³

What does the Education for All Act do?

The Education for All (EFA) Act seeks to ensure that the United States provides resources and leadership necessary for a successful international effort to afford all children a quality basic education. To achieve the goal of universal quality basic education, the EFA Act lays out U.S. policy that includes working with other countries, international organizations, and civil society to assist developing countries and strengthen their educational systems; assist nongovernmental and multilateral organizations; and promote education as the foundation for community development.

¹ UNESCO, Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2011

² UNESCO, Education for All Global Monitoring Report, *Education Counts: Towards the Millennium Goals*, 2011
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001902/190214e.pdf>

³ Global Partnership for Education. April 2012. <http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/images/infographics/HowWeWork.pdf>

The EFA Act lays out the following principles for U.S. support for global basic education:

- **Authorizing Multilateral Assistance:** Calls on the U.S. to integrate bilateral and multilateral assistance to achieve maximum impact. It authorizes the U.S. to support a multilateral education initiative, such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the only multilateral partnership focused on ensuring all children have access to a quality education. The GPE is an innovative model, working directly with developing country governments and their partners to develop and fund national education plans. GPE is also a proven, effective model. In GPE countries, the primary school completion rate rose from 56 percent to 71 percent between 2000 and 2010, and the number of out of school children fell from 34 to 18 percent. Even further, GPE reduces overhead, relying on donor agencies with the lowest unit cost and the greatest comparative advantage to deliver its support in each country, ensuring that donor aid has the most impact.
- **Increasing Access:** Seeks to increase access to quality schools and teachers for all children, with a focus on marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as: girls, children affected by or emerging from armed conflict or humanitarian crises, children with disabilities, children in remote or rural areas, children who lack access to safe water and sanitation, religious or ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, orphans and children impacted by HIV/AIDS, child laborers, married adolescents, and victims of trafficking.
- **Improving Quality:** Focuses on increasing the quality of education through improved literacy and numeracy, critical thinking, and civic education. It directs improved monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness and quality of education programs.
- **Building Country Capacity and Country Ownership:** Calls for the U.S. to help developing countries create and implement national education plans and requires the U.S. to align assistance to support these plans.
- **Coordinating within the U.S. Government:** Calls for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to lead efforts to increase coordination between U.S. Government departments and agencies to ensure effective and efficient use of resources.

Why Education is Key for Poverty Reduction

- **Maternal, Newborn and Child Health:** A child born to an educated mother is more than twice as likely to survive to the age of five.⁴ Educated mothers are 50 percent more likely to immunize their children than mothers with no schooling.⁵
- **HIV/AIDS:** HIV/AIDS infection rates are halved among young people who finish primary school. If all kids received a complete primary education, at least 7 million new cases of HIV could be prevented in a decade.⁶
- **Gender Equality:** On average, for a girl in a poor country, each additional year of education beyond third or fourth grade will lead to 20 percent higher wages and a 10 percent decrease in the risk of her own children dying of preventable causes.⁷
- **Economic Development:** Education is a prerequisite for short and long-term economic growth – no country has achieved continuous and rapid economic growth without at least 40 percent of adults being able to read and write.⁸ Every \$1 spent on a person's education yields \$10-15 in economic growth over that person's working lifetime.⁹
- **Nutrition and Food Security:** Gains in women's education made the most significant difference in reducing malnutrition, outperforming a simple increase in the availability of food. A 63-country study by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) found that more productive farming as a result of female education accounted for 43 percent of the decline in malnutrition achieved between 1970 and 1995.¹⁰
- **Security and Democracy:** People of voting age with a primary education are 1.5 times more likely to support democracy than people with no education.¹¹ Countries with higher primary schooling and a smaller gap between rates of boys' and girls' schooling tend to enjoy greater democracy, and democratic political institutions (such as power-sharing and clean elections) are more likely to exist in countries with higher literacy rates and education levels.¹² Every year of schooling decreases a male's chance of engaging in violent conflict by 20 percent.¹³

⁴ *Education Counts: Towards the Millennium Development Goals*. UNESCO. Paris, 2011a. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001902/190214e.pdf>.

⁵ "Fast Facts: The Faces of Poverty." UN Millennium Project. 2006. http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/resources/fastfacts_e.htm.

⁶ *Learning to Survive: How education for all would save millions of young people from HIV/AIDS*. Global Campaign for Education. London, 2004. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CSO/Resources/Learning_to_Survive_by_Oxfam.pdf.

⁷ *What Works in Girls' Education*. Barbara Herz and Gene B. Sperling. Center for Universal Education. April 2004. http://www.cfr.org/publication/6947/what_works_in_girls_education.html.

⁸ *Teach a Child, Transform a Nation*. Basic Education Coalition. Washington, DC, 2004. www.un-n.org/orf/cso/TeachV1.pdf.

⁹ *Overcoming inequality: why governance matters. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009*. UNESCO. 2009.

¹⁰ *Explaining Child Malnutrition in Developing Countries: A Cross-Country Analysis*. Lisa C. Smith and Lawrence Haddad. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Washington, DC, 1999. <http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pubs/abstract/111/rr111.pdf>.

¹¹ *Putting Education to Work. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012*. UNESCO. 2012.

¹² "Education and Development." World Bank. Washington, DC. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099080118171/EducationBrochure.pdf>

¹³ Save the Children. September 2009. <http://www.savethechildren.org/newsroom/2009/rtf-threeyears.html>