

# ACTION SHEET

## Ask Your Rep. to Co-Sponsor H.R. 3706, the Reach Every Mother and Child Act of 2015

Just last month, UNICEF reported that we've more than halved the number of under-five child deaths since 1990, and saved over 48 million children's lives since 2000. While this is a drastic cut in child mortality, each year 5.9 million children still die of mainly preventable and treatable causes before their fifth birthday. And still, close to 300,000 women die due to complications with pregnancies each year. But, the latest evidence shows that we can end unnecessary deaths of children and moms globally by 2035, **but only if we changed business as usual.**

A new bipartisan bill introduced in the House of Representatives led by Reps. Dave Reichert (R-WA), Betty McCollum (D-MN), Barbara Lee (D-CA), and Michael McCaul (R-TX), is grounded in the global consensus that the end of these preventable deaths is possible. The Reach Every Mother and Child Act of 2015 (H.R. 3706) would enshrine important development reforms into law, ensuring the U.S. does its part to help countries to end preventable child and maternal deaths by 2035. It would help make certain that mothers and children can not only survive, but thrive.

The Reach Act builds on the recommendations of a Blue Ribbon Panel<sup>1</sup> of experts that identified important reforms for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and its work supporting countries to save the lives of mothers and children. USAID is already implementing some of the panel's proposed reforms, including creating clear benchmarks for success, appointing a Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator, and realigning \$2.9 billion in existing grants to improve health outcomes. As a milestone to ending preventable child deaths by 2035, USAID has set bold, intermediate goals of saving 15 million children's lives and 600,000 women's lives by 2020. But this alone will not be enough. The Reach Act will hold USAID accountable for a smarter, more effective approach to ending preventable child and maternal deaths.

### More on the Reach Act

Requiring a centralized and coherent strategy, the bill will improve coordination and maximize our investments, with returns measured in lives saved and healthy, prosperous communities. The bill will enshrine into law the need for:

- An ambitious, **coordinated U.S. Government strategy** with **clear, measurable goals** and increasing **accountability** and transparency at all levels for ending preventable maternal and child deaths and helping ensure healthy lives by 2035.

---

<sup>1</sup> Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel Report on USAID, June 2014 <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/blue-ribbon-advisory-panel.pdf>

- Focusing on the **poorest and most vulnerable populations**, recognizing the unique needs within different countries and communities.
- Scaling up the most **effective, evidence-based interventions** with a focus on country ownership and aligning with existing maternal, newborn, and child survival plans.
- Enshrining the Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator as responsible for **oversight and coordination** of resources directly linked to reducing maternal and child mortality.
- Creating **new, innovative funding sources** to complement U.S. investments.

With a strategy that puts kids and mothers first, we have the chance to make sure every child, regardless of where she’s born, has a healthy start to life.

## Demonstrate Strong Constituent Support with Letters

Write letters to your representative and senators to demonstrate constituent support for action and gather your community to help!

1. Tell your members of Congress:

- That you believe that now is the time to create a healthy, bright future for millions of mothers and children worldwide.
- Emphasize that **this isn’t just a pipe dream**. The evidence shows that the end of preventable maternal and child deaths is possible.
- Explain that H.R. 3706 will help **turn this lofty goal into a viable plan, and ask for your Representative to co-sponsor this bill**.

2. Use the EPIC format like the sample below to write to Congress or the media. Increase your impact by personalizing your letter with a story of your own, or one you’ve read or heard.

<b>Engage</b>	In all corners of the world, at all hours of the day, women are in labor and babies are being delivered. On a day of such hope, too often reality sinks in – where you give birth and where you are born may just determine whether you survive and thrive.
<b>Problem</b>	Worldwide, 5.9 million children die each year before they reach their fifth birthday. Almost 300,000 women die each year from complications with pregnancies. The vast majority of these deaths happen in poor countries and most are preventable.
<b>Inform about the solution</b>	Reps. Reichert, McCollum, McCaul, and Lee introduced the Reach Act (H.R. 3706), which is a new bipartisan bill that aims to build the foundations for ending the senseless deaths of young children and mothers in a generation. The legislation calls for a coordinated strategy for ending preventable child and maternal deaths and sets clear targets for reaching the poorest people with effective, evidence-based interventions.
<b>Call to action!</b>	No matter where they are born, women and children deserve to thrive. Will Congress(woman) XXXX co-sponsor this critical legislation?

Need More Background Information? Use this [fact sheet](#), watch our [webinar](#), or read about [USAID’s child survival work](#) online.