

Ask Your Senator to Cosponsor S.1911, the Reach Every Mother and Child Act of 2015

In every part of the world parents have the same dream for their kids – to have the opportunity to grow up healthy and thrive. Much too often, that dream is cut short. Each year 6.3 million children still die of mainly preventable and treatable causes before they reach their fifth birthday, and nearly 300,000 women die annually due to complications with pregnancies. But the latest evidence shows that we can end unnecessary deaths of children and moms globally by 2035.

Together, **Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) and Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) have introduced the Reach Every Mother and Child Act of 2015 (S.1911, or the Reach Act)** to enshrine important development reforms into law to pave the way for reaching the 2035 goal.

The United States has long been a leader helping moms and babies survive and thrive by partnering with developing countries to support life-saving vaccines and quality nutrition. However, a high-level review by a panel of business and development leaders concluded that we will not meet our goals without first addressing underlying bureaucratic challenges.¹

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), our main global development agency, 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 program investments 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 numbers of healthy, prosperous communities. The bill will enshrine into law:

- Creation of 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.

¹ Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel Report on USAID, June 2014
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/blue-ribbon-advisoy-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 senators to demonstrate constituent support for action and gather your community to help!

1. Tell your Senators:

- 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 S.1911 will help **turn this lofty goal into a viable plan**.
- That there are many constituents who want him/her to cosponsor this bill.**

2. Use the EPIC format like the sample below to write to your Senates. Increase your impact by personalizing your letter with a story of your own (or one you’ve read or seen that has had a particular impact on you).

E ngage	In all corners of the world, at all hours of the day, women are in labor and babies are being delivered. But at these moments of joy and hope, reality sinks in – where one gives birth or is born often dictates whether one survives and thrives, or not.
P roblem	Worldwide, 6.3 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.
I nform about the solution	Senators Collins and Coons introduced the Reach Act (S.19111) 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.
C all to action!	No matter where they are born, women and children deserve to thrive. Will Senator 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.