

Grace Meng

(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. _____

Affirming the role of the United States in improving access to quality, inclusive public education and improving learning outcomes for children and adolescents, particularly for girls, around the world.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. MENG submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Affirming the role of the United States in improving access to quality, inclusive public education and improving learning outcomes for children and adolescents, particularly for girls, around the world.

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed January 24 as the International Day of Education, in celebration of the role of education for peace and development;

Whereas the theme of the fifth International Day of Education is “to invest in people, prioritize education”;

Whereas access to quality education reduces poverty, advances economic prosperity, improves peace and security,

and strengthens public health, and poverty is one of the most striking factors that impedes the attainment of foundational learning skills, particularly with regard to reading;

Whereas foundational learning is an essential first step to enable children and young people to access more advanced learning and skills, and children who cannot read and understand a simple text will struggle to learn anything else in school and they are more likely to repeat a grade and drop out of school;

Whereas at its peak, COVID–19-related school closures affected more than 94 percent of the world’s students, representing 1,580,000,000 children and youth, from preprimary to higher education, in 200 countries;

Whereas an estimated 147,000,000 children have missed more than half of their in-class instruction over the past 2 years due to school closures caused by the COVID–19 pandemic;

Whereas this generation of children, affected by disruptions to education because of the pandemic, could lose a combined total of \$17,000,000,000,000 in lifetime earnings;

Whereas, before COVID–19, primary enrollment for girls had increased by 65 percent; now an estimated 129 million girls worldwide remain out of school and face multiple barriers to education, and investments in addressing the challenges that are keeping girls out of school are critical investments in global prosperity;

Whereas approximately 222,000,000 school-aged children are affected by crises, of which 78,200,000 are out of school and 119,600,000 are not achieving minimum com-

petencies in mathematics and reading despite attending school;

Whereas at the end of 2021 an estimated (41 percent) 36,500,000 of the world's 89,300,000 refugees, internally displaced persons, and other forcibly displaced persons were children and an estimated 68 percent of refugee children were enrolled at the primary level, but only 37 percent were enrolled at the secondary level;

Whereas there remains a need to close the gap between refugees and their peers in the area of higher education;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) should expand access to distance learning materials and technology, support safe school reopening plans, including reenrollment campaigns for out-of-school children and youth, and prioritize assessments of student learning levels, remedial and accelerated learning, and curriculum adaptation, and renew efforts to reach marginalized students, including girls, children with disabilities, and those living in displaced persons camps, in line with the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Public Law 117–229);

Whereas for every \$1 invested in girls' education, as much of \$2.80 is generated in economic growth, equating to billions of dollars in additional GDP growth, and in contrast, failing to educate girls is costing countries between \$15,000,000,000,000 and \$30,000,000,000,000 in lost lifetime productivity and earnings;

Whereas even as domestic resources are taken into account, the annual financing gap over 2015–2030 for reaching quality universal preprimary, primary, and secondary

education in low and lower middle income countries is \$39,000,000,000;

Whereas continued and increased bilateral educational support from the United States Government, as well as multilateral partnerships like the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW), play a critical role in helping marginalized children and adolescents build a future for themselves and the communities in which they live;

Whereas in fiscal year 2021, USAID global education programs reached more than 33,400,000 learners in 73 countries and assisted more than 113,000 schools at the preprimary, primary, and secondary levels;

Whereas the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a proven and effective aid delivery mechanism that complements the United States Government's bilateral basic education programs by fostering coordination among all key partners, supporting the development and implementation of strong national education sector plans, and building on the commitment of developing country governments to expand quality educational opportunities for children in an equitable manner;

Whereas the United States Government's annual support for GPE has had a transformative impact in the lives of children around the world, and since GPE's inception in 2002, 160,000,000 more children, more than half of them girls, are in school in GPE's 85 partner countries;

Whereas the United States pledged \$305,000,000 over 3 years to the Global Partnership for Education at its 2021 Global Education Summit;

Whereas ECW is at the forefront of efforts to increase access to education in crisis settings, and since its inception in 2016, ECW has reached 6,900,000 children and adolescents; provided education materials and textbooks to over 4,200,000 children; strengthened equity and gender equality by reaching 3,300,000 girls; supported the training of 87,367 teachers and administrators; doubled the number of teachers trained on mental health and psychosocial support; and developed 24 Multi-Year Resilience Programs and disbursed 199 First Emergency Response grants;

Whereas the United States has been central to the success of ECW, as the third largest donor to ECW currently, and continued support will be critical if ECW is to meet its 2023–2026 Strategic Plan goals;

Whereas the private sector is an important partner to USAID and the Department of State in reaching international education goals as evidenced by a 2019 joint pledge of \$12,500,000 to Education Cannot Wait by LEGO Foundation to bring quality learning experiences to children in emergency situations;

Whereas the United States Government has long been a leader in global education and has made global commitments to improve access to education and learning for at least 15,000,000 girls globally by 2025;

Whereas the United States has also endorsed the Commitment to Action on Foundational Learning as developed with World Bank, UNICEF, and USAID during the 2022 United Nations Transforming Education Summit, committing to taking urgent and decisive action to ensure all children develop the foundational skills needed to re-

duce the global share of children unable to read and understand a simple text by age 10, by half, by 2030;

Whereas USAID made 16 commitments to be achieved by 2026 at the Global Disability Summit, including commitments to promote disability-inclusive education, strengthen disability data for education programming, promote the Universal Design for Learning approach in all new education programs, and increase disability-inclusive initiatives at all levels of education, from preprimary through higher education programming;

Whereas Congress has long supported strong bipartisan funding for the International Basic Education program at USAID; however the President's annual Budget Request for international basic education funding has been lower than the previously congressionally appropriated level since 2004;

Whereas Congress passed the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act (Division A, Public Law 115–56), in 2017 to demonstrate the United States Government's commitment to improve access to education around the world and ensure individuals around the world have the education and skills needed to be productive members of society and the workforce; and

Whereas the authorities under the READ Act expire at the end of fiscal year 2023: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) commends the leadership and commitment
- 3 of the United States Government to improve access
- 4 to quality, inclusive education and improved learning
- 5 outcomes for the poorest and most marginalized

1 children and adolescents worldwide, which promotes
2 global stability, economic prosperity, and poverty
3 elimination;

4 (2) recognizes that United States Government
5 investments in bilateral basic education are com-
6 plemented by Global Partnership for Education’s
7 education systems-level approach and partnership
8 building and Education Cannot Wait’s focus on edu-
9 cation in emergencies and protracted crises;

10 (3) encourages the United States Government
11 to integrate education in all humanitarian response
12 efforts—both bilateral and multilateral—and con-
13 tinue to promote coordination across all sectors and
14 branches of the United States Government;

15 (4) implores the United States Government to
16 meet its various commitments to international basic
17 education through its annual budget requests to
18 Congress and to expand bilateral and multilateral
19 support recognizing the significant global need;

20 (5) calls on the Secretary of State and the Ad-
21 ministrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
22 national Development to use all diplomatic, humani-
23 tarian, and development means, including via high-
24 level leadership in multilaterals, and global
25 convenings, to promote access to quality education

1 for children and adolescents throughout the world;
2 and

3 (6) calls on the Secretary of State and the Ad-
4 ministrators of the United States Agency for Inter-
5 national Development to commit to prioritizing qual-
6 ity, inclusive public education for children and youth
7 with disabilities, girls, children and youth in emer-
8 gency and crisis settings, and traditionally
9 marginalized groups as a critical component to
10 learning equity, poverty elimination, and global sta-
11 bility and prosperity.