



READ Act Reauthorization Act (H.R.681/S.41)

The Problem: Currently, **58 million primary school-aged children globally do not attend school and 260 million do not have access to quality education.** Gender discrimination in school contributes to the illiteracy of over **500 million women** in adulthood as well. These issues, along with frequent global conflicts, undermine the benefits of education. The negative secondary consequences of COVID-19 have also exacerbated these barriers over the last three years.

The Solution: On Sep. 8, 2017, the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act was signed into law. The READ Act **emphasizes the value of education for economic growth and social mobility** as it promotes educational programs around the world. Through the READ Act, partnerships for educational development will have greater oversight, coordination and a renewed focus on retention. **H.R.681/S.41 reauthorizes the READ Act for an additional five years continuing such work as:**

- **Leveraging U.S. capabilities** through technical assistance, training and research;
- **Improving the quality of basic education** by supporting educational goals in lower-income countries, replicating successful education interventions and measuring learning outcomes in students, especially for girls and young women;
- Amending previous goals of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 in order to develop a coordinated, sustainable and aid-effective plan with partner countries, donors, multilateral institutions, the private sector and nongovernmental and civil society organizations to promote quality basic education through programs that:
 - **Respond to the needs of countries** to achieve improvements in literacy
 - **Strengthen education systems** and expand access to safe learning
 - **Promote education** as a foundation for sustained economic growth

Other Noteworthy Facts:

- The original READ Act called for the appointment of a USAID employee to the role of Senior Coordinator of United States International Basic Education Assistance. The Senior Coordinator is responsible for **strategic development, coordination and oversight of programs and activities that promote international basic education.**
- Since the READ Act's implementation, **over 122 million learners and educators have been reached** through programs that are expanding access to quality education for all.
- Education reduces poverty, increases incomes and economic growth, fosters peace, reduces child marriage, decreases violence and extremism, promotes gender equality and saves lives.

Supporters: Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) introduced this bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the READ Act on January 24, 2023. Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ-04) and Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY-06) introduced the House companion on January 31, 2023.

"...Reauthorizing the READ Act couldn't come at a more important time. Doing so will ensure U.S. development programs continue to focus on providing basic education around a sound, long-term strategy – one that includes making sure girls have access to schooling. This legislation has strong bipartisan support, which we saw through its original passage into law in 2017 and SFRC passage of this reauthorization last Congress." — Senator Durbin