



Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018 (H.R.5480)

The Issue: Gender inequality is a key factor in women making up the majority of the world's poor. Along with lower incomes, many women are denied the ownership and control of property. In addition, more than one billion women cannot access basic financial services, turning to disorganized saving and risky loans. Women entrepreneurs growing small and medium enterprises are impeded by these challenges.

The Solution: By confronting the financial barriers and inequality that women face, focusing on entrepreneurship, property rights and financial inclusion, as much as \$28 trillion could be added to the annual global GDP by 2025. When women have a voice over household finances, family economic status improves and childhood survival rates, food security and educational attainment increase as well.

The Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018 would legislate for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to carry out policies that reduces gender disparities related to economic participation and opportunity by:

- Creating a gender analysis that will explain gaps between men and women. The analysis will help to provide accurate measures of enforcing strategies, projects and activities that promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Requiring that gender-specific considerations and efforts to empower women be integrated into all USAID programs.
- Expanding support for small and medium-sized enterprises that are owned, managed and controlled by women.
- Modernizing USAID's development assistance programs to include financial literacy, technology and other actions that improve property and inheritance rights for women.

Cost: The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects that H.R.5480 would cost U.S. taxpayers less than \$500,000 over a four-year period (2018-2022).

Other Noteworthy Facts

- H.R.5480 was introduced in the House by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) and Rep. Lois Frankel (D-FL), Co-Chair of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues on April 12, 2018.
- Rep. Frankel noted: "When we educate girls and empower women with the tools to support their families and add value to their communities' economy, their nations will be safer, stronger, and more peaceful."