

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4038

To amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to address the issue of mother-to-child transmission of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 21, 2000

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

A BILL

To amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to address the issue of mother-to-child transmission of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Mother-to-Child HIV
5 Prevention Act of 2000”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) According to UNAIDS, nearly 4,500,000
2 children under 15 years of age have been infected
3 with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) since
4 the AIDS epidemic began. More than 3,000,000
5 have already died of AIDS. Children are becoming
6 infected at about the rate of 1 child every minute,
7 and the overwhelming majority of these children ac-
8 quire the infection from their mothers.

9 (2) The gap between rich and poor countries in
10 terms of transmission of HIV from mother to child
11 has been increasing. Moreover, AIDS threatens to
12 reverse years of steady progress of child survival in
13 developing countries. UNAIDS believes that by the
14 year 2010, AIDS may have increased mortality of
15 children under 5 years of age by more than 100 per-
16 cent in regions most affected by the virus.

17 (3) The discovery of a relatively simple and
18 cheap means of interrupting the transmission of
19 HIV from an infected mother to the unborn child—
20 namely with nevirapine (NVP), which costs US\$4 a
21 tablet—has created a great opportunity for an un-
22 precedented partnership between the United States
23 Government and the governments of Asian, African
24 and Latin American countries to combat mother-to-

1 child transmission (also known as “vertical trans-
2 mission”) of HIV.

3 (4) According to UNAIDS, this strategy will
4 decrease the proportion of orphans that are HIV-in-
5 fected and decrease infant and child mortality rates
6 in these developing regions.

7 (5) USAID, UNAIDS, and UNICEF are en-
8 gaged in 11 pilot projects around the world. These
9 studies will be completed within the year, and the
10 technical and ethical questions associated with
11 antiretroviral prevention strategies will be mastered
12 well enough in order for a significant increase in
13 scale to be undertaken.

14 (6) Primary prevention strategies should re-
15 main the top priority in the fight against AIDS and
16 no funds should be diverted away from it. Therefore,
17 new funding for vertical transmission should only be
18 additive in nature. Once appropriated, this funding
19 will facilitate widespread delivery of antiretroviral
20 strategies to address the vertical transmission prob-
21 lem.

22 (7) New antiretroviral drug strategy can be a
23 force for social change, providing the opportunity
24 and impetus needed to tackle often long-standing
25 problems of inadequate services and the profound

1 stigma associated with HIV-infection and the AIDS
2 disease. Strengthening the health infrastructure to
3 improve mother-and-child health, antenatal, delivery
4 and postnatal services, and couples counseling gen-
5 erates enormous spillover effects toward combating
6 the AIDS epidemic in developing regions.

7 **SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE FOR PREVENTION OF VERTICAL**
8 **TRANSMISSION.**

9 Section 104(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961
10 (22 U.S.C. 2151b(c)) is amended by adding at the end
11 the following new paragraph:

12 “(4)(A) Congress recognizes the growing inter-
13 national dilemma of children with the human immuno-
14 deficiency virus (HIV) and the merits of intervention pro-
15 grams aimed at this problem. Congress further recognizes
16 that mother-to-child transmission prevention strategies
17 can serve as a major force for change in developing re-
18 gions, and it is, therefore, a major objective of the foreign
19 assistance program to control the AIDS epidemic. The
20 agency primarily responsible for administering this part
21 shall—

22 “(i) coordinate with UNAIDS, UNICEF,
23 WHO, local governments, and other organizations to
24 develop and implement effective strategies to prevent
25 vertical transmission of HIV; and

1 “(ii) coordinate with those organizations to in-
2 crease in scale intervention programs and introduce
3 voluntary counseling and testing, antiretroviral
4 drugs, replacement feeding, and other strategies
5 more widely in due course.

6 “(B) In addition to amounts otherwise available for
7 such purpose, there are authorized to be appropriated to
8 the President, \$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
9 2001 through 2005 to be used to carry out this paragraph.
10 Funds appropriated under this paragraph are authorized
11 to remain available until expended.”.

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