

109TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 2392

To promote the empowerment of women in Afghanistan.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 8, 2006

Mrs. BOXER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To promote the empowerment of women in Afghanistan.

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 “Afghan Women Em-
5 powerment Act of 2006”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Under the oppressive rule of the Taliban,
9 the women of Afghanistan were denied the most
10 basic human rights, including the rights to work, to
11 an education, to health care, and to move freely.

1 (2) Women who attempted to assert their rights
2 under the Taliban regime were subjected to beatings
3 and imprisonments, and many suffer from the long-
4 term consequences of such oppression.

5 (3) Women in Afghanistan have one of the
6 highest mortality rates in the world, with an esti-
7 mated 16,000 maternal deaths annually.

8 (4) Despite efforts by the United States Gov-
9 ernment and the international community to improve
10 the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan, many
11 women and girls continue to lack access to basic
12 services, including health care and education. Ap-
13 proximately 80 percent of Afghan women are illit-
14 erate.

15 (5) Today, women and girls in Afghanistan still
16 face oppression resulting from violence and intimidat-
17 ion by Taliban and other militia groups. In recent
18 months, there has been a significant increase in the
19 number of attacks against girls' schools in an at-
20 tempt to prevent women and girls from regaining
21 their rights and freedoms.

22 (6) The strengthening of institutions and non-
23 governmental organizations that are led by women in
24 Afghanistan is essential to building civil society and

1 holding the Government of Afghanistan accountable
2 for protecting women’s rights and human rights.

3 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON WOMEN’S RIGHTS IN AF-**
4 **GHANISTAN.**

5 It is the sense of Congress that—

6 (1) the protection of the rights of women and
7 girls in Afghanistan and their full participation in
8 the reestablishment of democracy are essential to the
9 reconstruction of a stable and democratic Afghani-
10 stan, and to achieve such a reconstruction, the
11 United States Government must commit resources to
12 advance the rights of women throughout Afghani-
13 stan;

14 (2) the United States Government should pro-
15 vide strong support for the Afghan Ministry of
16 Women’s Affairs and the Afghan Independent
17 Human Rights Commission, both of which were cre-
18 ated by the Agreement on Provisional Agreements in
19 Afghanistan Pending the Establishment of Perma-
20 nent Governing Institutions, done in Bonn December
21 5, 2001 (commonly known as the “Bonn Agree-
22 ment”) to remedy past violations of women’s rights
23 and human rights and to establish institutions and
24 programs to ensure policies that advance such
25 rights;

1 (3) the United States Government should make
2 it a priority to provide assistance to Afghan-led non-
3 governmental organizations, particularly Afghan
4 women-led nonprofit organizations; and

5 (4) grants and assistance to Afghanistan shall
6 be conditioned upon the Government of Afghanistan
7 adhering to international standards for women’s
8 rights and human rights.

9 **SEC. 4. ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN AND GIRLS.**

10 Section 103(a)(7) of the Afghan Freedom Support
11 Act of 2002 (22 U.S.C. 7513(a)(7)) is amended—

12 (1) in subparagraph (A), by striking clauses (i)
13 through (xii) and inserting the following:

14 “(i) to provide equipment, medical
15 supplies, and other assistance to health
16 care facilities for the purpose of reducing
17 maternal and infant mortality and mor-
18 bidity;

19 “(ii) to establish and expand pro-
20 grams to provide services to women and
21 girls suffering from posttraumatic stress
22 disorder, depression, and mental illness;

23 “(iii) to protect and provide services
24 to vulnerable populations, including wid-

1 ows, orphans, and women head of house-
2 holds;

3 “(iv) to establish primary and sec-
4 ondary schools for girls that include math-
5 ematics, science, and languages in their
6 primary curriculum;

7 “(v) to expand technical and voca-
8 tional training programs to enable women
9 to support themselves and their families;

10 “(vi) to maintain and expand adult
11 literacy programs, including economic lit-
12 eracy programs that promote the well-
13 being of women and their families;

14 “(vii) to provide special educational
15 opportunities for girls whose schooling was
16 ended by the Taliban and who now face
17 obstacles to participating in the normal
18 education system, such as girls who are
19 now married and girls who are older than
20 the normal age for their classes;

21 “(viii) to disseminate information
22 throughout Afghanistan on the rights of
23 women and on international standards for
24 human rights;

1 “(ix) to provide information and as-
2 sistance to enable women to exercise prop-
3 erty, inheritance, and voting rights, and to
4 ensure equal access to the judicial system;

5 “(x) to monitor and investigate viola-
6 tions of women’s rights and to provide
7 legal assistance to women who have suf-
8 fered violations of their rights;

9 “(xi) to increase political and civil
10 participation of women in all levels of soci-
11 ety, including the criminal justice system;

12 “(xii) to provide information and
13 training related to women’s rights and
14 human rights to military, police, and legal
15 personnel; and

16 “(xiii) to provide assistance to the
17 Ministry of Women’s Affairs and the Inde-
18 pendent Human Rights Commission for
19 programs to advance the status of
20 women.”; and

21 (2) by restating subparagraph (B) to read as
22 follows:

23 “(B) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—For each
24 of the fiscal years 2007 through 2009—

1 “(i) \$5,000,000 is authorized to be
2 appropriated to the President to be made
3 available to the Afghan Ministry of Wom-
4 en’s Affairs for the administration and
5 conduct of its programs;

6 “(ii) \$10,000,000 is authorized to be
7 appropriated to the President to be made
8 available to the Afghan Independent
9 Human Rights Commission for the admin-
10 istration and conduct of its programs; and

11 “(iii) \$30,000,000 is authorized to be
12 appropriated to the President for grants to
13 Afghan women-led nonprofit organizations
14 to support activities including the construc-
15 tion, establishment, and operation of
16 schools for married girls and girls’ orphan-
17 ages, vocational training for women and
18 girls, health care clinics for women and
19 children, programs to strengthen Afghan
20 women-led organizations and women’s
21 leadership, and to provide monthly finan-
22 cial assistance to widows, orphans, and
23 women head of households.”.

1 **SEC. 5. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ASSISTANCE.**

2 It is the sense of Congress that, in providing assist-
3 ance under section 103(a)(7) of the Afghan Freedom Sup-
4 port Act (22 U.S.C. 7513(a)(7)), as amended by section
5 4, the President should—

6 (1) condition the provision of such assistance on
7 the recipient adhering to international standards for
8 women’s rights and human rights; and

9 (2) ensure that Afghan women-led nongovern-
10 mental organizations throughout Afghanistan with
11 demonstrated experience in delivering services to Af-
12 ghan women and children receive grants without eth-
13 nic, religious, or any other discrimination.

14 **SEC. 6. REPORTING REQUIREMENT.**

15 (a) **REPORTS REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days
16 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 6
17 months thereafter for 3 years, the Secretary of State and
18 the Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
19 national Development shall jointly submit a report on the
20 activities carried out under this Act to the Committee on
21 Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations
22 of the Senate and the Committee on International Rela-
23 tions and the Committee on Appropriations of the House
24 of Representatives.

25 (b) **CONTENT.**—Each report submitted under sub-
26 section (a) shall include the amount of assistance provided

1 under section 103(a)(7) of the Afghan Freedom Support
2 Act of 2002 (22 U.S.C. 7513(a)(7)), as amended by sec-
3 tion 4, to—

- 4 (1) the Afghan Ministry of Women’s Affairs;
- 5 (2) the Afghan Independent Human Rights
6 Commission; and
- 7 (3) Afghan women-led nonprofit organizations.

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