**The Coalition for Adolescent Girls Welcomes the House Introduction of the Keeping Girls In School Act**

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The Coalition for Adolescent Girls welcomes the bipartisan legislation introduced by Representative Frankel (D, FL) and Representative Brooks (R, IN), titled the Keeping Girls in School Act. The bill is designed to ensure that U.S. foreign assistance addresses the barriers that keep more than 130 million girls ages 6-17 globally who should be in school from enrolling, attending, and graduating. We are particularly grateful for the strong bipartisan support demonstrated by original cosponsors Nita Lowey (D-NY), Dan Donovan (R-NY), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and Ami Bera (D-CA), the Keeping Girls in School Act is designed to harness the power of the U.S. Government to get at the root causes that keep more than 130 million girls globally, ages 6-17, from enrolling or attending school.

The Coalition for Adolescent Girls (CAG) has reviewed this legislation, and believes that the evidence presented in the findings section of Keeping Girls in School is consistent with the research and programmatic evidence presented by CAG members and the need to address barriers facing girls in accessing education. While education is a human right in and of itself, we also know that education can further the access and realization of other human rights, particularly for girls. We commend the Representatives for recognizing the power and potential of girls, particularly when given access to quality secondary education.

As the legislation notes, there are myriad obstacles facing girls in accessing education, such as child marriage, safety in and on the way to school, and harmful social norms that prioritize boys’ education over that of girls’. This legislation brings critical attention to the barriers girls face in accessing education, particularly those barriers faced at the secondary level, a time when adolescent girls are most at risk of dropping out of school. Choices made in adolescence have life-long consequences. A girl who is able to remain in a quality educational setting and complete secondary school is much more likely to delay the age at which she is married, has children, and is better able to participate in economic opportunities that will strengthen her future well-being. The CAG is particularly happy to see the requirement of a global strategy to empower adolescent girls, which the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls shall fulfill, which our members have [previously supported](http://coalitionforadolescentgirls.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/In-Response-to-the-U.S.-Global-Strategy-to-Empower-Adolescent-Girls.pdf).

This bill includes authorization for the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to enter into acquisition, assistance, or results-based financing agreements, including agreements combining more than one such feature, for activities addressing the barriers facing girls in obtaining quality education, paired with transparent results that are verified by an independent and empowered evaluator. Critically, the bill builds on existing strategies and frameworks to ensure coherence across USAID and the U.S. Department of State efforts, alongside interagency coordination of efforts.

**\*About the Coalition for Adolescent Girls**

The Coalition for Adolescent Girls (CAG) includes more than 80 organizations committed to working together on research, program implementation, policy and advocacy with and for adolescent girls. The CAG provides a unique platform for organizations to share information, tools, and resources; to find points of intersection and opportunities for collaboration; build technical capacity; and to strategize on best practices. For more information about the Coalition for Adolescent Girls, please email our Steering Committee at cagsteeringcommittee@gmail.com

**List of Supporting Organizations:**

1. 4Girls GLocal Leadership (4GGL)
2. Advocates for Youth
3. African Solutions to African Problems
4. Aflatoun
5. AGE Africa
6. AJWS
7. Be Girl
8. BRAC
9. CARE
10. Child and Youth Finance International
11. ChildFund International
12. ChildVoice International
13. Educate Girls
14. Education for Equality International
15. Equality Now
16. Every Mother Counts
17. FHI 360
18. Freely in Hope
19. Futures Without Violence
20. GADeF
21. GirlForward
22. Girl Effect
23. Girls Thinking Global
24. Girl Scouts
25. Girls Learn International
26. Global Fund for Children
27. GreeneWorks
28. GWU’s Global Women’s Institute
29. Haiti Adolescent Girls Network
30. Harpswell Foundation
31. International Center for Research on Women
32. International Rescue Committee
33. International Women’s Health Coalition
34. International Youth Foundation
35. IPPF/WHR
36. Institute for Reproductive Health
37. John Snow, Inc.
38. Just Like My Child Foundation
39. Kakenya’s Dream
40. Komera Project
41. Let Girls Lead
42. Lwala Community Alliance
43. Maasai Girls Education Fund
44. Making Cents International
45. Mercy Corps
46. Milaan Foundation
47. Pathfinder International
48. Plan International USA
49. Population Council
50. Population Reference Bureau
51. Population Services International
52. RefuSHE
53. Restless Development
54. Sacred Valley Project
55. Save the Children
56. Shadhika
57. Starfish
58. United Nations Foundation
59. What Works Association
60. Winrock International
61. WomenStrong International
62. World Education, Inc.
63. Women’s Global Education Project
64. Women’s Refugee Commission
65. Women’s World Banking
66. Zana Africa Foundation