

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to require a section on reproductive rights in the Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. KAINE, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. COONS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. MERKLEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to require a section on reproductive rights in the Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, and for other purposes.

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 “Reproductive Rights  
5 are Human Rights Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The United States has joined the inter-  
4 national community in identifying reproductive  
5 rights as human rights, including in connection with  
6 the 1994 International Conference on Population  
7 and Development, the 1995 Beijing World Con-  
8 ference on Women, and through its ratification of  
9 the International Covenant on Civil and Political  
10 Rights, done at New York December 19, 1966 (re-  
11 ferred to in this Act as “ICCPR”), the International  
12 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Ra-  
13 cial Discrimination, done at New York December 21,  
14 1965, and the Convention against Torture and  
15 Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or  
16 Punishment, done at New York December 10, 1984.

17 (2) General comment No. 36 (2018) on article  
18 6 of the ICCPR, which was adopted by the Human  
19 Rights Committee on October 30, 2018, asserts that  
20 States parties—

21 (A) should ensure access for all persons to  
22 “quality and evidence-based information and  
23 education about sexual and reproductive health  
24 and to a wide range of affordable contraceptive  
25 methods”;

1 (B) “must provide safe, legal, and effective  
2 access to abortion where the life and health of  
3 the pregnant woman or girl is at risk, or where  
4 carrying a pregnancy to term would cause the  
5 pregnant woman or girl substantial pain or suf-  
6 fering, most notably where pregnancy is the re-  
7 sult of rape or incest or is not viable”;

8 (C) “ensure the availability of, and effec-  
9 tive access to, quality prenatal and post-abor-  
10 tion health care for women and girls”; and

11 (D) must not impose restrictions on the  
12 ability of women or girls to seek abortion in a  
13 manner that jeopardizes their lives, subjects  
14 them to physical or mental pain or suffering,  
15 discriminates against them, arbitrarily inter-  
16 feres with their privacy, or places them at risk  
17 of undertaking unsafe abortions.

18 (3) Reproductive coercion, which is any behav-  
19 ior that interferes with autonomous decision making  
20 about reproductive health outcomes, is a violation of  
21 human rights.

22 (4) Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer,  
23 and intersex persons (LGBTQI+) face stigma and  
24 discrimination in accessing reproductive health serv-  
25 ices, and barriers, including anti-LGBTQI+ laws,

1 policies, and gender norms in countries. The denial  
2 of access to sexual and reproductive health care and  
3 associated human rights violations due to these bar-  
4 riers should be reported in relevant Department of  
5 State Annual Country Reports on Human Rights  
6 Practices.

7 (5) Human rights are grounded in international  
8 standards. The Department of State's deletion of  
9 the reproductive rights subsection from its 2017,  
10 2018, and 2019 Country Reports on Human Rights  
11 Practices inappropriately politicized human rights of  
12 people around the world.

13 (6) Limiting reproductive rights also limits  
14 pathways to economic, social, and political empower-  
15 ment. Sexual and reproductive health and rights are  
16 essential for sustainable economic development, are  
17 intrinsically linked to gender equality and women's  
18 well-being, and are critical to community health.

19 (7) The global COVID-19 pandemic has placed  
20 at risk the fulfillment of reproductive rights. The  
21 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for  
22 Human Rights has raised concerns that overloaded  
23 health systems, shortages of medical supplies, and  
24 disruptions of global supply chains have undermined

1 the sexual and reproductive health and rights of in-  
2 dividuals.

3 **SEC. 3. ANNUAL COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS**  
4 **PRACTICES.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Foreign Assistance Act of  
6 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) is amended—

7 (1) in section 116(d) (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d)), by  
8 amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

9 “(2) the status of reproductive rights in each  
10 country, including—

11 “(A) whether such country has adopted  
12 and enforced policies—

13 “(i) to promote access to safe, effec-  
14 tive, and affordable methods of contracep-  
15 tion and comprehensive, accurate, non-  
16 discriminatory family planning and sexual  
17 health information;

18 “(ii) to promote access to a full range  
19 of quality health care services to ensure  
20 safe and healthy pregnancy and childbirth  
21 free from violence and discrimination;

22 “(iii) to promote the equitable preven-  
23 tion, detection, and treatment of sexually  
24 transmitted infections, including HIV and

1 HPV, and of reproductive tract infections  
2 and reproductive cancers; and

3 “(iv) to expand or restrict access to  
4 safe abortion services or post-abortion  
5 care, or to criminalize pregnancy-related  
6 outcomes, including spontaneous mis-  
7 carriages or pregnancies outside of mar-  
8 riage;

9 “(B) a description of the rates and causes  
10 of pregnancy-related injuries and deaths, in-  
11 cluding deaths due to unsafe abortions;

12 “(C) a description of—

13 “(i) the nature and extent of in-  
14 stances of discrimination, coercion, and vi-  
15 olence against women, girls, and  
16 LGBTQI+ individuals in all settings  
17 where health care is provided, including in  
18 detention;

19 “(ii) instances of obstetric violence,  
20 involuntary or coerced abortion, involun-  
21 tary or coerced pregnancy, coerced steri-  
22 lization, use of incentives or disincentives  
23 to lower or raise fertility, withholding of  
24 information on reproductive health options,

1 and other forms of reproductive and sexual  
2 coercion; and

3 “(iii) the actions, if any, taken by the  
4 government of such country to respond to  
5 such discrimination, coercion, and violence,  
6 if applicable;

7 “(D) a description of—

8 “(i) the proportion of individuals of  
9 reproductive age (15 through 49 years of  
10 age) whose need for family planning is sat-  
11 isfied with modern methods;

12 “(ii) the barriers such individuals face  
13 in accessing such services;

14 “(iii) the nature and extent of in-  
15 stances of denial of comprehensive and ac-  
16 curate family planning information and  
17 services in such country; and

18 “(iv) the actions, if any, taken by the  
19 government of such country to address  
20 such denials; and

21 “(E) a description of—

22 “(i) disparities in access to family  
23 planning and reproductive health services  
24 and pregnancy-related health outcomes, in-  
25 cluding pregnancy-related injuries and

1 deaths, based on race, ethnicity, indigenous  
2 status, language, religious affiliation, or  
3 other marginalized identity; and

4 “(ii) any measures taken by the gov-  
5 ernment of such country to hold health  
6 systems accountable for addressing such  
7 disparities;” and

8 (2) in section 502B (22 U.S.C. 2304)—

9 (A) by redesignating the second subsection  
10 (i) (relating to child marriage status) as sub-  
11 section (j); and

12 (B) by adding at the end the following:

13 “(k) INCLUSION OF STATUS OF REPRODUCTIVE  
14 RIGHTS IN ANNUAL COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN  
15 RIGHTS PRACTICES.—The report required under sub-  
16 section (b) shall include a description of the status of re-  
17 productive rights in each country, including—

18 “(1) whether such country has adopted and en-  
19 forced policies—

20 “(A) to promote access to safe, effective,  
21 and affordable methods of contraception and  
22 comprehensive, accurate, non-discriminatory  
23 family planning and sexual health information;

24 “(B) to promote access to a full range of  
25 quality health care services to ensure safe and



1 healthy pregnancy and childbirth, free from vio-  
2 lence and discrimination;

3 “(C) to promote the equitable prevention,  
4 detection, and treatment of sexually transmitted  
5 infections, including HIV and HPV, and of re-  
6 productive tract infections and reproductive  
7 cancers; and

8 “(D) to expand or restrict access to safe  
9 abortion services or post-abortion care, or crim-  
10 inalize pregnancy-related outcomes, including  
11 spontaneous miscarriages and pregnancies out-  
12 side of marriage;

13 “(2) a description of the rates and causes of  
14 pregnancy-related injuries and deaths, including  
15 deaths due to unsafe abortions;

16 “(3) a description of—

17 “(A) the nature and extent of instances of  
18 discrimination, coercion, and violence against  
19 women, girls and LGBTQI+ individuals in all  
20 settings where health care is provided, including  
21 in detention;

22 “(B) instances of coerced abortion, coerced  
23 pregnancy, coerced sterilization, use of incen-  
24 tives or disincentives to lower or raise fertility,  
25 withholding of information on reproductive

1 health options, and other forms of reproductive  
2 and sexual coercion; and

3 “(C) the actions, if any, taken by the gov-  
4 ernment of such country to respond to such dis-  
5 crimination, coercion, and violence, if applica-  
6 ble;

7 “(4) a description of—

8 “(A) the proportion of individuals of repro-  
9 ductive age (15 through 49 years of age) whose  
10 need for family planning is satisfied with mod-  
11 ern methods;

12 “(B) the barriers such individuals face in  
13 accessing such services;

14 “(C) the nature and extent of instances of  
15 denial of comprehensive and accurate family  
16 planning information and services in such coun-  
17 try; and

18 “(D) the actions, if any, taken by the gov-  
19 ernment of such country to respond to such de-  
20 nials; and

21 “(5) a description of—

22 “(A) disparities in access to family plan-  
23 ning and reproductive health services and preg-  
24 nancy-related health outcomes, including preg-  
25 nancy-related injuries and deaths, based on

1 race, ethnicity, indigenous status, language, re-  
2 ligious affiliation, or other marginalized iden-  
3 tity; and

4 “(B) any measures taken by the govern-  
5 ment of such country to hold health systems ac-  
6 countable for addressing such disparities.”.

7 (b) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—In preparing the  
8 Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices re-  
9 quired under sections 116(d) and 502B of the Foreign As-  
10 sistance Act of 1961, as amended by subsection (a)), the  
11 Secretary of State, the Assistant Secretary of State for  
12 Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and other relevant  
13 officials, including human rights officers at United States  
14 diplomatic and consular posts, shall consult with—

15 (1) representatives of United States civil society  
16 and multilateral organizations with demonstrated ex-  
17 perience and expertise in sexual and reproductive  
18 health and rights or promoting the human rights of  
19 women, girls, and LGBTQI+ persons;

20 (2) relevant local nongovernmental organiza-  
21 tions in all countries included in such reports, in-  
22 cluding organizations serving women, girls, and  
23 LGBTQI+ persons that are focused on sexual and  
24 reproductive health and rights; and

1           (3) relevant agencies and offices of the United  
2       States Government that track or are otherwise in-  
3       volved in the monitoring of reproductive and sexual  
4       health around the world.