

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4508

To expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

Mr. JEFFRIES (for himself and Mrs. WAGNER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program.

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 “Malala Yousafzai
5 Scholarship Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) In late 2008, Malala Yousafzai began mak-
9 ing the case for access to education for women and
10 girls despite objections from the Pakistani Taliban.

1 On October 9, 2012, Malala was shot in the head by
2 Pakistani Taliban on her way home from school.

3 (2) In 2013, Malala Yousafzai and her father
4 Ziauddin Yousafzai co-founded the Malala Fund.
5 The Malala Fund works to secure twelve years of
6 free, safe, and quality education for all girls. Com-
7 pletion of a full twelve-year cycle of primary and sec-
8 ondary education ensures a pipeline of girls able to
9 pursue higher education.

10 (3) On July 12, 2013, Malala delivered a
11 speech before the United Nations General Assembly
12 calling for expanded access to education for women
13 and girls across the globe. She said, “[L]et us wage
14 a glorious struggle against illiteracy, poverty, and
15 terrorism. Let us pick up our books and our pens.
16 They are the most powerful weapons . . . Education
17 is the only solution.”.

18 (4) On October 10, 2014, Malala Yousafzai be-
19 came the co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for
20 her “struggle against the suppression of children
21 and young people and for the right of all children to
22 education”.

23 (5) According to the United Nations 2016
24 Global Education Monitoring Report, more than 130
25 million girls worldwide are out of school. 15 million

1 girls of primary-school age will never enter a class-
2 room. As of 2016, at least 500 million adult women
3 across the globe are illiterate.

4 (6) According to the World Bank, “Girls’ edu-
5 cation is a strategic development priority. Better
6 educated women tend to be healthier, participate
7 more in the formal labor market, earn higher in-
8 comes, . . . marry at a later age, and enable better
9 health care and education for their children, should
10 they choose to become mothers. All these factors
11 combined can help lift households, communities, and
12 nations out of poverty.”.

13 (7) In 2015, all United Nations Member States,
14 including the United States, adopted quality edu-
15 cation, including access to higher education, and
16 gender equality as sustainable development goals to
17 be attained by 2030. One of the education goal tar-
18 gets is to “ensure equal access for all women and
19 men to affordable and quality technical, vocational
20 and tertiary education, including university”.

21 (8) In January 2010, Secretary of State Hillary
22 Rodham Clinton stated, “We will open the doors of
23 education to all citizens, but especially to girls and
24 women . . . We are doing all of these things because
25 we have seen that when women and girls have the

1 tools to stay healthy and the opportunity to con-
2 tribute to their families” well-being, they flourish
3 and so do the people around them.

4 (9) In February 2019, the White House
5 launched the Women’s Global Development and
6 Prosperity Initiative to advance women’s economic
7 empowerment across the globe and reach more than
8 100,000 women.

9 (10) The World Economic Forum ranks Paki-
10 stan the second lowest among all countries in the
11 world evaluated for gender equality. On educational
12 attainment for women, Pakistan is ranked the tenth
13 lowest.

14 (11) In Pakistan, the rate of higher education
15 enrollment beyond high school for girls and women
16 is just 9 percent as reported by the World Bank.
17 The global rate is 40 percent. Less than 6 percent
18 of women 25 and older in Pakistan attain a bach-
19 elor’s degree or equivalent as of 2016.

20 (12) According to the World Bank, “Higher
21 education benefits both individuals and society. Eco-
22 nomic returns for college graduates are the highest
23 in the entire educational system—an average 17 per-
24 cent increase in earnings per year of schooling as
25 compared with 10 percent for primary school.”.

1 (13) The United States provides critical foreign
2 assistance to Pakistan’s education sector to improve
3 access to and the quality of basic and higher edu-
4 cation. Since 2010, the United States Agency for
5 International Development (referred to in this Act
6 as “USAID”) has awarded more than 6,000 scholar-
7 ships for young women to receive higher education
8 in Pakistan.

9 (14) The Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship
10 Program administered by USAID awards scholar-
11 ships to academically talented, financially needy
12 Pakistani students from all regions, including female
13 students from rural areas of the country, to pursue
14 bachelor’s or master’s degrees at participating Paki-
15 stani universities.

16 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that—

18 (1) every individual should have the opportunity
19 to pursue a full cycle of primary, secondary, and
20 higher education;

21 (2) every individual, regardless of gender,
22 should have the opportunity to pursue an education
23 without fear of discrimination;

1 (3) educational exchanges promote institutional
2 linkages between the United States and Pakistan;
3 and

4 (4) recipients of scholarships referred to in sec-
5 tion 4 should commit to improving their local com-
6 munities.

7 (b) CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL INITIA-
8 TIVES IN PAKISTAN.—Congress encourages the Depart-
9 ment of State and USAID to continue their support for
10 initiatives led by the Government of Pakistan and civil so-
11 ciety that promote education in Pakistan, especially edu-
12 cation for women, in accordance with USAID’s 2018 Edu-
13 cation Policy.

14 **SEC. 4. MERIT AND NEEDS-BASED SCHOLARSHIP PRO-**
15 **GRAM.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—The USAID Administrator shall
17 award at least 50 percent of the number of scholarships
18 under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program
19 (referred to in this Act as the “Program”) to women for
20 each of the calendar years 2020 through 2022.

21 (b) LIMITATIONS.—

22 (1) CRITERIA.—The scholarships available
23 under subsection (a) may only be awarded in accord-
24 ance with other scholarship eligibility criteria already
25 established by USAID.

1 (2) **ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES.**—Scholarships au-
2 thorized under subsection (a) shall be awarded for a
3 range of disciplines to improve the employability of
4 graduates and to meet the needs of the scholarship
5 recipients.

6 (3) **OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS.**—The USAID Ad-
7 ministrators shall make every effort to award 50 per-
8 cent of the scholarships available under the Program
9 to Pakistani women.

10 (c) **LEVERAGING INVESTMENT.**—The USAID Ad-
11 ministrators shall, to the greatest extent practicable, con-
12 sult with and leverage investments by the Pakistani pri-
13 vate sector and Pakistani diaspora communities in the
14 United States as part of USAID’s greater effort to im-
15 prove the quality of, expand access to, and ensure sustain-
16 ability of education programs in Pakistan.

17 **SEC. 5. ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING.**

18 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The USAID Administrator shall
19 designate appropriate USAID officials to brief the appro-
20 priate congressional committees, not later than 1 year
21 after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually
22 thereafter for the next 3 years, on the implementation of
23 section 4.

1 (b) CONTENTS.—The briefing described in subsection
2 (a) shall include, among other relevant information, for
3 the most recently concluded fiscal year—

4 (1) the total number of scholarships that were
5 awarded through the Program, including a break-
6 down by gender;

7 (2) the disciplines of study chosen by the schol-
8 arship recipients;

9 (3) the percentage of the scholarships that were
10 awarded to students seeking a bachelor's degree or
11 a master's degree, respectively;

12 (4) the percentage of scholarship recipients who
13 voluntarily dropped out of school or were involun-
14 tarily pushed out of the program for failure to meet
15 program requirements; and

16 (5) the percentage of scholarship recipients who
17 dropped out of school due to retaliation for seeking
18 an education, to the extent that such information is
19 available.

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