

**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H.R. 1500
OFFERED BY MS. HOULAHAN OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

2 This Act may be cited as the “Global Learning Loss
3 Assessment Act of 2021”.

4 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) Before the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (com-
7 monly referred to as “COVID–19”) pandemic began,
8 258,000,000 children were out of school globally, in-
9 cluding 130,000,000 girls.

10 (2) Students already at a disadvantage before
11 COVID–19 will experience greater learning loss,
12 thereby worsening inequity and inequality.

13 (3) Approximately 90 percent of the world’s
14 student population—over 1,600,000,000 children
15 and youth—have had their education disrupted by
16 school closure due to COVID–19.

1 (4) School closures lead to interrupted learning,
2 poor nutrition, gaps in childcare, increased dropout
3 rates, exposure to violence, and social isolation.

4 (5) Up to 24,000,000 children are at risk of
5 dropping out of school permanently due to rising lev-
6 els of child poverty associated with the pandemic.

7 (6) School closure and remote learning is espe-
8 cially burdensome on girls, who are frequently ex-
9 pected to shoulder more household chores and re-
10 sponsibilities and are more vulnerable to gender-
11 based violence.

12 (7) During the Ebola epidemic, nationwide
13 school closures in Sierra Leone in 2014 led to in-
14 creased instances of sexual- and gender-based vio-
15 lence, teenage pregnancy, school dropout, and child
16 labor for girls.

17 (8) More than 60 percent of national distance
18 learning alternatives rely exclusively on online plat-
19 forms but two-thirds of the world's school aged chil-
20 dren, or 1,300,000,000 children aged 3 through 17,
21 do not have internet connection in their homes, and
22 schools and local learning centers also frequently
23 have inadequate internet connectivity. Eighty per-
24 cent of students in sub-Saharan Africa lack such ac-
25 cess, with an even higher rate for girls.

1 (9) Children and youth with disabilities are par-
2 ticularly vulnerable to the health, education, and so-
3 cioeconomic consequences of the pandemic. As a fur-
4 ther challenge, distance learning tools are not always
5 accessible to learners with disabilities or those with
6 complex learning needs, especially in poorer and
7 rural households.

8 (10) Before the COVID–19 pandemic, refugee
9 children were twice as likely to be out of school as
10 other youth, and school closures and a lack of access
11 to distance learning tools threaten to make the edu-
12 cation gap among refugee children even more severe.

13 (11) The economic downturn caused by the
14 COVID–19 pandemic could lead to an education fi-
15 nancing gap of \$77,000,000,000 in low- and middle-
16 income countries over the next 2 years.

17 (12) The economic cost of school closures could
18 be up to \$1,337 per student, which on a global scale
19 equates to approximately \$10,000,000,000,000 in
20 lost economic output over the coming generation.

21 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

22 It is the policy of the United States that United
23 States-funded basic education programs operating in low-
24 and middle-income countries should seek to—

1 (1) provide inclusive learning opportunities for
2 students and teachers, especially for the most
3 marginalized, including girls, children with disabili-
4 ties, and previously out of school children;

5 (2) build local capacity and help countries
6 strengthen their education systems, including oppor-
7 tunities for early childhood development;

8 (3) improve the availability, delivery, and qual-
9 ity of education services from early childhood
10 through secondary education;

11 (4) improve equity and safety in education serv-
12 ices; and

13 (5) support the return of children to school who
14 have experienced interruptions in their education
15 due to the COVID–19 pandemic and work to enroll
16 previously out-of-school children and youth, particu-
17 larly the most marginalized.

18 **SEC. 4. REPORT.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
20 date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of
21 the United States Agency for International Development,
22 acting through the Senior Coordinator for International
23 Basic Education Assistance and in consultation with the
24 Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women’s
25 Empowerment, shall submit to the appropriate congres-

1 sional committees a report on the impact of the COVID–
2 19 pandemic on United States Agency for International
3 Development basic education programs.

4 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report re-
5 quired under subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum,
6 the following elements:

7 (1) An assessment of the impact of COVID–19
8 on such basic education programs, including the
9 magnitude of learning loss that will result from pro-
10 tracted school closures and the specific effects of
11 school and learning space closures on marginalized
12 children and youth, including girls, minority popu-
13 lations, displaced children, and those with disabil-
14 ities.

15 (2) A description of the effectiveness, cost, ac-
16 cessibility, and reach of the most commonly used
17 forms of distance learning in low- and middle-income
18 countries and low-resource contexts.

19 (3) A description of efforts to pivot and adapt
20 such basic education programs during the COVID–
21 19 pandemic, including an overview of existing data
22 on funding and programmatic focus disaggregated
23 by gender, country, education level, and disability.

24 (4) An identification and description of any
25 gaps in, or barriers to, reaching and educating

1 marginalized populations, such as girls, children
2 with disabilities, displaced children, or other children
3 adversely affected by the COVID–19 pandemic with
4 distance learning interventions.

5 (5) A description of the United States Agency
6 for International Development’s plan and needed au-
7 thorities and resources to prevent degradation of
8 such basic education programs and to support, as
9 necessary and appropriate, continued distance learn-
10 ing interventions, safe school reopenings, assess-
11 ments of student learning levels, remedial and accel-
12 erated learning, re-enrollment campaigns for out-of-
13 school children and youth, and education system
14 strengthening and resilience-building efforts.

15 (6) An analysis of the coordination between the
16 United States Agency for International Development
17 and other actors in global basic education policy and
18 programming to provide education during the
19 COVID–19 pandemic, including partner organiza-
20 tions, faith based-organizations, donors, and multi-
21 lateral organizations.

22 (7) A description of opportunities to partner
23 and support efforts to expand access to digital infra-
24 structure, internet connectivity, and learning re-
25 sources in areas that lack access to digital and re-

1 mote learning infrastructure and resources, includ-
2 ing rural and remote communities.

3 (c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The report required by
4 subsection (a) shall be made available to the public.

5 (d) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES
6 DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate con-
7 gressional committees” means—

8 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the
9 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
10 resentatives; and

11 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and
12 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to direct the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to submit to Congress a report on the impact of the COVID–19 pandemic on United States Agency for International Development basic education programs.”.

