

READ Act Reauthorization Act of 2023 (H.R.681 / S.41)

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The Power of Education

U.S. partnerships with low-income countries have helped build stronger education systems around the world. Efforts to increase resources, build infrastructure, and train teachers have seen incredible results.

Despite those achievements, the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted students around the world, disrupting the education of more than 616 million students. Conflict, instability, and other humanitarian emergencies around the world have only increased those education gaps, with girls, low-income children, and children with disabilities facing the greatest barriers.



Photo from World Vision School Up Program in Laos

In low- and middle-income countries, up to **70% of 10-year-olds are unable to read a simple text**. The longer vulnerable children are out of school, the less likely they are to return, and the World Bank estimates that **this generation of students will lose \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings**.

Impact and Accountability

Introduced by Representatives Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Grace Meng (D-NY), and Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Marco Rubio (R-FL), the **Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act Reauthorization Act of 2023** would reauthorize the READ Act of 2017 for an additional 5 years, continuing current U.S. efforts to ensure equal access to quality education for children throughout the world.

The READ Act Reauthorization ensures that the U.S. government updates their strategy to improve foundational literacy and numeracy in basic education. It also requires rigorous monitoring and evaluation efforts and a yearly report to Congress and the public. Specifically, the legislation calls for:

- Developing a comprehensive integrated U.S. strategy that improves educational opportunities and addresses key barriers to school attendance, retention and completion, especially for girls;
- Ensuring education services for children affected by conflict and other emergencies;
- Coordinating U.S. government efforts to efficiently and effectively manage resources;
- Working with countries to strengthen systems in order to build long-term sustainability;

- Engaging with key partners including other donors, civil society and multilateral initiatives, including the Global Partnership for Education, to leverage U.S. contributions to achieve greater impact;
- Requiring specific indicators and objectives with which to measure progress; and
- Improving the transparency and accountability of U.S. basic education programs, ensuring taxpayer dollars have the most impact for children worldwide.

The U.S. government has long been a leader in global education, and the READ Act increased the effectiveness and impact of this work. Reauthorizing for another five years will maintain a well-resourced global education strategy and ensure the U.S. effectively contributes to realizing quality education around the world.

Far-reaching Effects

Passing the READ Act could transform the world, and uplift girls, children with disabilities, and other marginalized communities. Education is a key solution to poverty, with ripple effects that impact individual lives, future generations, and entire societies. Did you know...

- **Girls with no education are three times as likely to marry before age 18** as those with secondary education.
- **For each year of school completed, future wages increase an average of 10 percent.** This impact is even greater for girls. On average, for a girl in a poor country, each additional year of education will lead to up to 20 percent higher wages.
- No country has achieved continuous and rapid economic growth without **at least 40 percent of adults being able to read and write.**

Supporting This Bipartisan Legislation

You can support the READ Reauthorization Act by cosponsoring and [urging Congressional leadership to take action to pass the bill.](#)

For congressional offices – To sign on as a cosponsor, please contact:

House of Representatives

- Rep. Chris Smith: john.mcdonough@mail.house.gov
- Rep. Grace Meng: max.harris@mail.house.gov

Senate

- Sen. Marco Rubio: alex_moree@rubio.senate.gov or
- Sen. Richard Durbin: corey_cowan@durbin.senate.gov

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