

SUPPORT H.R. 3206: The Global Sexual and Reproductive Health Act of 2013

UNSAFE ABORTION IS A CRITICAL GLOBAL HEALTH ISSUE. According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 47,000 women—primarily impoverished women in the global south—die yearly from unsafe abortion worldwide, and millions more suffer from serious complications. Many of these deaths and injuries could be prevented through a U.S. foreign policy that promotes access to contraception and helps to ensure access to safe abortion for women. Rep. Yvette Clarke's **Global Sexual and Reproductive Health Act of 2013** does exactly that, ensuring that women in the global south have access to the quality health care they deserve and upholding their basic reproductive health and rights.

The **Global Sexual and Reproductive Health Act of 2013** would promote sexual and reproductive health (SRH) by:

- » Ensuring that individuals and couples can freely and responsibly determine the number, timing, and spacing of their children and have the means to do so through access to contraceptives and other family planning services
- » Reducing the incidence of unsafe abortion by providing support for safe abortion care (in effect repealing the damaging **Helms Amendment**¹⁾ as well as care for women who experience complications from unsafe abortion

(1) *The Helms Amendment was appended to the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act in 1973. The Amendment stipulates that "no foreign assistance funds may be used to pay for the performance of abortion as a method of family planning, or to motivate or coerce any person to practice abortion."*

- » Ensuring that SRH services are provided at every phase of humanitarian emergency, with special focus on the SRH needs of victims of rape and sexual assault
- » Ensuring access to SRH care and comprehensive sexuality education for young people
- » Creating linkages among the various components of SRH, including HIV/AIDS care, maternal health, and testing and treatment of STIs, in order to ensure that women and young women can access comprehensive care throughout their lives
- » Repealing the Mexico City Policy, also known as the Global Gag Rule²⁾

The bill, which was introduced by Rep. Yvette Clarke (D-NY) and cosponsored by 31 others, has been referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

More than 40 international and domestic NGOs—spanning global health, development, reproductive rights and humanitarian aid—have endorsed the bill.

Support access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care that includes safe abortion. Encourage your representative to cosponsor H.R. 3206: The Global Sexual and Reproductive Health Act of 2013.

(2) *The Mexico City Policy/Global Gag Rule is a ban imposed by the executive branch of the U.S. government. It prevents organizations that receive U.S. funding for family planning from providing abortion-related care, services, and information. The ban also prohibits these groups from using their own private, non-US funds for the aforementioned activities.*