



# THE GLOBAL HER ACT

## WHAT IS THE GLOBAL HER ACT?

The Global Health, Empowerment, and Rights Act (Global HER Act) would prevent a future president from unilaterally imposing the Global Gag Rule.

## WHY DO WE NEED IT?

The Global Gag Rule remains one of the most odious policies ever enacted on foreign assistance. When in effect, it strips U.S. funding from foreign health care providers if they offer abortion services, counseling, or referral for abortion services, or engage in political advocacy around the issue of abortion—even if they undertake these activities with their own, separate, non-U.S. funding. It prevents organizations from speaking out about the impact of unsafe abortion in their own countries, despite the fact that unsafe abortion remains a leading cause of maternal death and injury in many low- and middle-income countries.

Additionally, the Global Gag Rule's documented effects are entirely contrary to the stated goal of reducing abortion: In 2019, independent researchers at Stanford University found that the version of the Global Gag Rule imposed by George W. Bush—a less expansive version than that in effect under Donald Trump—caused abortion rates in the countries most affected to increase by 40 percent between 2001 and 2008.

President Biden rescinded the policy on January 28, 2021, but lingering effects remain. It takes time for new money to make its way into the field, and even with renewed access to funds, some clinics that have been forced to close will not re-open. And because the Global Gag Rule is an executive action, without the Global HER Act, the threat of its return hangs over providers, inevitably creating a “chilling effect.” They may be reluctant to initiate programs or partnerships that will have to be ended within a few years, and the potential loss of funding makes the challenges of long-term planning even more pronounced.

The only way to ensure that the Global Gag Rule never returns is through permanent, legislative repeal via the Global HER Act. Passing the language of the Global HER Act this year is a necessary step towards making American policy more effective, more rational, and more just.

## GLOBAL HER ACT DETAILS

### IN THE SENATE

**Bill Number: S. 142**

**Sponsor: Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)**

**Latest Action: January 28, 2021 (introduced to the Senate)**

**Number of Cosponsors: 48**

### IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**Bill Number: H.R. 556**

**Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13); Jan Schakowsky (D-IL-9) and Ami Bera (D-CA-7) are co-leads**

**Latest Action: January 28, 2021 (introduced to the House of Representatives)**

**Number of Cosponsors: 183**

Summary (same for Senate and House bills): This bill states that foreign nongovernmental organizations shall not be ineligible for U.S. international development assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 solely on the basis of health or medical services provided by such organizations with non-U.S. government funds if such services do not violate the laws of the country in which they are being provided and would not violate U.S. federal law if provided in the United States. Such organizations also shall not be subject to requirements relating to the use of non-U.S. government funds for advocacy and lobbying activities other than those that apply to U.S. nongovernmental organizations receiving such assistance under such Act.