

## The U.S. Senate delivered a victory for women and girls across the world

The State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill ("Foreign Ops bill"), H.R. 2764 passed the full Senate by a margin of 81-12 votes with key provisions that will promote and protect the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls in developing countries:

- **The amendment offered by Senator Boxer (D-CA) and Senator Snowe (R-ME) to repeal the Mexico City Policy (Global Gag Rule) passed by a margin of 53-41 votes.** As you know, this restrictive policy bars U.S. family planning aid, including contraceptives, to any foreign organization that uses its own funds or funds from other donors to provide information, make referrals, or counsel women on abortion; advocate for the liberalization of abortion policies; or perform legal abortion services. To see how your Senators voted on this amendment, please click [here](#). An "aye" vote means they voted for the amendment (and for repealing the Global Gag Rule), and a "nay" vote means they voted against the amendment (and for keeping the Global Gag Rule in place).
- **A provision that grants the President authority to waive the restriction under PEPFAR that 1/3 of all U.S. global HIV prevention funding be used for abstinence-until-marriage programs passed.**
- **An increase in funding for international family planning and reproductive health programs in fiscal year 2008 (\$461.1 million) also passed.**

**Thank you** to all who contacted their Senators about these critical provisions?your efforts paid off! We encourage you to keep the momentum going and follow up with your Senators about the Foreign Ops bill. If your Senators voted in favor the Boxer-Snowe amendment, we recommend contacting them via e-mail or phone ([www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)) to thank them for their support of the health and well-being of women, girls, and families worldwide by voting to repeal the Global Gag Rule. In the meantime, CHANGE will keep you posted about other ways you can take action as the Senate Foreign Ops bill heads to conference committee.

What do these developments in the Foreign Ops bill mean for the PATHWAY Act and the HIV Prevention Act? Although the Senate has joined the House in passing the 1/3 abstinence-until-marriage earmark waiver for fiscal year 2008, we cannot relent in our efforts to permanently remove the earmark. Moreover, we must continue advocating for a global HIV prevention framework that adequately and realistically addresses the needs of women and girls in developing nations?especially as PEPFAR reauthorization approaches.

Please email your Representatives today and urge them to co-sponsor the PATHWAY Act. Additionally, we encourage you to participate in a National Call-In Week (Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>) to urge Senators to co-sponsor the HIV Prevention Act. If you are interested in participating or organizing your own event, please contact Kim Whipkey at [kwhipkey@genderhealth.org](mailto:kwhipkey@genderhealth.org) or 301.270.1182.

Thank you for your continued advocacy. Stay tuned for further updates and opportunities to take action.  
Best,

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The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE) is a US-based non-governmental organization focused on the effects of US international policies on the health and rights of women, girls and other vulnerable populations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

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