

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMM. PRINT 117-54
OFFERED BY MS. MENG OF NEW YORK

At the appropriate place in title LVIII, insert the following:

1 **SEC. ____ . SAFE FROM THE START ACT.**

2 (a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the
3 United States—

4 (1) to take effective action to prevent, mitigate,
5 and address gender-based violence occurring during
6 humanitarian emergencies around the world;

7 (2) to ensure collective commitment to and ac-
8 countability for immediate humanitarian action on
9 gender-based violence at all levels, especially on the
10 part of senior humanitarian leadership;

11 (3) to maintain sustained political will and ro-
12 bust systems and processes in order to establish,
13 monitor, and enforce accountability for humanitarian
14 action;

15 (4) to systematically integrate and coordinate
16 efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based vio-
17 lence in United States foreign policy and foreign as-
18 sistance programs, including conflict prevention, hu-

1 humanitarian relief and recovery, and peace-building
2 efforts;

3 (5) to promote accountability and access to jus-
4 tice for acts of gender-based violence;

5 (6) to build local capacity in countries respond-
6 ing to humanitarian crises, including the capacity of
7 governments at all levels and of nongovernmental or-
8 ganizations, especially women-focused and women-
9 led organizations, to prevent, mitigate, and respond
10 to gender-based violence;

11 (7) to consult, cooperate, coordinate, and col-
12 laborate with nongovernmental partners and inter-
13 national organizations, including women-focused and
14 women-led organizations, when designing and imple-
15 menting humanitarian response programs;

16 (8) to support activities that prevent and miti-
17 gate the impacts of gender-based violence in humani-
18 tarian settings and that empower survivors or those
19 at risk of gender-based violence, including through
20 economic opportunities, access to education and
21 skills building, and promotion of women's leadership
22 and participation in humanitarian response;

23 (9) to ensure that international organizations
24 and nongovernmental organizations receiving fund-
25 ing from the United States have the capacity and in-

1 ternal protocols to address gender-based violence, in-
2 cluding sexual exploitation and abuse committed by
3 humanitarian personnel, integrate gender-based vio-
4 lence prevention and response initiatives into policies
5 and programs, and report regularly on efforts to
6 prevent, mitigate, and address gender-based violence;

7 (10) to employ a multisectoral approach to inte-
8 grate prevention, mitigation, and response to GBV
9 into humanitarian;

10 (11) to ensure protection against sexual exploi-
11 tation and abuse by humanitarian actors; and

12 (12) to include the active leadership and par-
13 ticipation of women and girls in humanitarian pro-
14 gram design, implementation, and evaluation.

15 (b) SAFE FROM THE START AUTHORIZATION.—

16 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State,
17 in coordination with the Administrator of the United
18 States Agency for International Development, is au-
19 thorized to establish an interagency effort, to be
20 known as the “Safe from the Start” program, to
21 provide assistance to international organizations and
22 non-governmental organizations to carry out activi-
23 ties to prevent, mitigate, and address gender-based
24 violence in humanitarian crises.

1 (2) PROGRAMMING EFFORTS.—The Secretary
2 shall support efforts to prevent, mitigate, and ad-
3 dress gender-based violence through Safe from the
4 Start programs, including the following efforts:

5 (A) Building technical capacity of humani-
6 tarian response actors to prevent and respond
7 to GBV, and improve their ability to deploy
8 skilled gender advisors, conduct rapid gender
9 analyses, and effectively coordinate on GBV
10 mitigation measures across humanitarian re-
11 sponse activities;

12 (B) Ensuring quality protection for GBV
13 survivors and those at-risk of GBV at the onset
14 of the emergency, including medical and psy-
15 chosocial health, education, livelihoods, legal,
16 shelter, and sanitation services;

17 (C) Promoting women’s and girls’ leader-
18 ship and participation in humanitarian response
19 activities, including the design, implementation,
20 and evaluation of humanitarian responses.

21 (D) Increasing and improving empower-
22 ment activities for survivors of GBV, including
23 women’s and girls’ access to economic opportu-
24 nities and livelihoods, education and skills, and
25 leadership roles.

1 (E) Building and improving international
2 standards and evidence-based best practices
3 with respect to gender-based violence preven-
4 tion, monitoring, and response, through support
5 to evaluations, research, and the development of
6 innovative new practices.

7 (F) Developing safe spaces for the safe
8 disclosure of incidents of gender-based violence
9 and to receive culturally-specific support;

10 (G) Improving and strengthening guide-
11 lines, toolkits, reporting mechanisms, and other
12 institutional response and accountability meas-
13 ures in order to incorporate effective GBV pre-
14 vention and mitigation activities across all hu-
15 manitarian assistance programs and projects.

16 (H) Safeguarding against sexual exploi-
17 tation or abuse by humanitarian personnel by
18 prioritizing activities that ensure that Federal
19 employees and contractors delivering United
20 States humanitarian assistance are equipped to
21 address sexual exploitation and abuse in set-
22 tings of humanitarian aid delivery, including by
23 strengthening guidelines, training, reporting
24 mechanisms, and remedies that both recognize
25 and address the risks within the humanitarian

1 aid context that can create vulnerabilities for
2 sexual exploitation and abuse.

3 (3) PROGRAMMING IMPROVEMENT OF PROTEC-
4 TION MECHANISMS.—The Secretary shall improve
5 the delivery and quality of United States assistance
6 to protect survivors of gender-based violence,
7 through the Safe from the Start programming de-
8 scribed in subsection (b), by improving assistance
9 activities, including activities carried out under the
10 Safe from the Start program, in the following areas:

11 (A) Access to and quality of comprehensive
12 medical services for survivors and at-risk popu-
13 lations in line with the international standards
14 described in subsection (b)(5), including—

15 (i) post-rape and post-sexual assault
16 medical care;

17 (ii) psycho-social and mental health
18 services; and

19 (iii) hygiene and dignity kits.

20 (B) Service delivery to hard-to-reach popu-
21 lations, prioritizing services that reach—

22 (i) survivors of natural disasters;

23 (ii) refugee and internally displaced
24 person camps and settlements;

25 (iii) active conflict zones; and

1 (iv) refugees and IDPs living in urban
2 areas.

3 (4) IMPROVING STANDARDS AND GUIDE-
4 LINES.—The Secretary shall support global efforts
5 to develop tools to improve institutional response
6 and accountability measures in order to incorporate
7 effective gender-based violence prevention and re-
8 sponse activities across all humanitarian assistance
9 programs and projects, including through—

10 (A) the promotion of minimum standards,
11 indicators, and metrics to guide GBV mitiga-
12 tion efforts and to assess the adequacy of hu-
13 manitarian interventions relating to gender-
14 based violence;

15 (B) the establishment and implementation
16 of standards, protocols, and accountability
17 mechanisms for preventing and addressing sex-
18 ual exploitation or abuse perpetrated by per-
19 sonnel delivering humanitarian assistance; and

20 (C) the development of monitoring tools
21 across all humanitarian assistance program-
22 ming to standardize monitoring and account-
23 ability relating to gender-based violence preven-
24 tion and response.

1 (5) CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT.—The Sec-
2 retary shall provide support for capacity-building of
3 organizations seeking to prevent, mitigate, and ad-
4 dress gender-based violence, including by—

5 (A) building capacity of on-the-ground or-
6 ganizations to recognize, prevent, and address
7 gender-based violence in humanitarian settings
8 and to support survivors and those at risk, in-
9 cluding through training and deploying female
10 humanitarian aid workers;

11 (B) performing on-the-ground rapid gender
12 assessments to ascertain needs in the context of
13 the humanitarian situation;

14 (C) improving technical expertise and the
15 availability of dedicated gender advisors and
16 training and sensitization of humanitarian aid
17 workers on support for survivors of gender-
18 based violence;

19 (D) promoting supportive partnerships be-
20 tween local humanitarian actors and nongovern-
21 mental organizations, including for women’s
22 leadership and participation in humanitarian
23 response; and

24 (E) training for nongovernmental providers
25 of international development assistance during

1 the onset and subsequent phases of a humani-
2 tarian crisis, so that such providers are
3 equipped to continue relief, recovery, and recon-
4 struction work that is sensitive to the preven-
5 tion and mitigation of gender-based violence
6 after the immediate humanitarian engagement
7 has finished.

8 (c) PROGRESS REPORT.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
10 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
11 of State, in coordination with the Administrator of
12 the United States Agency for International Develop-
13 ment, shall submit to the appropriate congressional
14 committees a report on the progress made by the
15 United States through Safe from the Start pro-
16 grams, to prevent, mitigate, and address gender-
17 based violence in humanitarian emergencies.

18 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by para-
19 graph (1) shall include each of the following:

20 (A) An aggregation and examination of
21 data and research regarding the key drivers of
22 gender-based violence during humanitarian
23 emergencies, the critical needs of survivors or
24 those at risk of such violence, and successful

1 program models to address, prevent, and miti-
2 gate such violence.

3 (B) A detailed description of the programs,
4 diplomatic efforts, and other activities under-
5 taken by the United States to implement the
6 Safe from the Start programming focus de-
7 scribed in subsection (b), including specific de-
8 scriptions of—

9 (i) the steps taken to integrate pre-
10 vention, mitigation, and response to
11 gender- based violence into the delivery of
12 humanitarian assistance, the development
13 of humanitarian standards, and responses
14 to specific humanitarian crises;

15 (ii) the progress made, as of the date
16 of the submission of the report, toward
17 achieving specific objectives, metrics, and
18 indicators for implementation of Safe from
19 the Start programming, disaggregated
20 where appropriate by gender, age, and type
21 of violence;

22 (iii) a list of the projects funded or
23 supported through the Safe from the Start
24 programming focus, with specific details on
25 levels of funding or assistance and impacts

1 of such projects, disaggregated where ap-
2 propriate by gender, age, and type of vio-
3 lence;

4 (iv) an assessment of the extent to
5 which consultations with nongovernmental
6 organizations, including local actors, and
7 intergovernmental actors, have led to the
8 development of programs, standards, and
9 interventions to combat gender-based vio-
10 lence;

11 (v) a list of the policies or programs
12 implemented by international or multilat-
13 eral organizations receiving funding from
14 the United States Government to improve
15 capacity and internal protocols to identify
16 signs of gender- based violence, including
17 sexual exploitation and abuse, and inte-
18 grate initiatives to prevent, mitigate and
19 address gender-based violence into all pro-
20 grams of the organization; and

21 (vi) a description of any diplomatic
22 action taken bilaterally, multilaterally, or
23 with international organizations to encour-
24 age international organizations and the
25 governments of other countries to adopt

1 policies to prevent, mitigate, and address
2 gender-based violence in emergency situa-
3 tions.

4 (3) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—In developing
5 the report required by paragraph (1), the Secretary
6 of State and Administrator of the United States
7 Agency for International Development shall consult
8 with the Assistant Secretary for Population, Refu-
9 gees, and Migration of the Department of State and
10 the Assistant Administrator for the Bureau of Hu-
11 manitarian Assistance of the U.S. Agency for Inter-
12 national Development.

13 (4) FORM.—The report required by paragraph
14 (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may
15 include a classified annex. The unclassified portion
16 of such report shall concurrently be published on a
17 publicly available website of the Department of
18 State.

19 (5) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
20 TEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “ap-
21 propriate congressional committees” means—

22 (A) the Committee on Appropriations and
23 the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House
24 of Representatives; and

1 (B) the Committee on Appropriations and
2 the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Sen-
3 ate.

4 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
5 authorized to be appropriated \$140,000,000 for each fis-
6 cal year to carry out this section.

