AMENDMENT TO RULES COMM. PRINT 117–54

OFFERED BY MS. MENG OF NEW YORK

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

SEC. ___. SAFE FROM THE START ACT.

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

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

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

(3) to maintain sustained political will and robust systems and processes in order to establish, monitor, and enforce accountability for humanitarian action;

(4) to systematically integrate and coordinate efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in United States foreign policy and foreign assistance programs, including conflict prevention, hu-
manitarian relief and recovery, and peace-building efforts;

(5) to promote accountability and access to justice for acts of gender-based violence;

(6) to build local capacity in countries responding to humanitarian crises, including the capacity of governments at all levels and of nongovernmental organizations, especially women-focused and women-led organizations, to prevent, mitigate, and respond to gender-based violence;

(7) to consult, cooperate, coordinate, and collaborate with nongovernmental partners and international organizations, including women-focused and women-led organizations, when designing and implementing humanitarian response programs;

(8) to support activities that prevent and mitigate the impacts of gender-based violence in humanitarian settings and that empower survivors or those at risk of gender-based violence, including through economic opportunities, access to education and skills building, and promotion of women’s leadership and participation in humanitarian response;

(9) to ensure that international organizations and nongovernmental organizations receiving funding from the United States have the capacity and in-
ternal protocols to address gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse committed by humanitarian personnel, integrate gender-based violence prevention and response initiatives into policies and programs, and report regularly on efforts to prevent, mitigate, and address gender-based violence;

(10) to employ a multisectoral approach to integrate prevention, mitigation, and response to GBV into humanitarian;

(11) to ensure protection against sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian actors; and

(12) to include the active leadership and participation of women and girls in humanitarian program design, implementation, and evaluation.

(b) SAFE FROM THE START AUTHORIZATION.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, is authorized to establish an interagency effort, to be known as the “Safe from the Start” program, to provide assistance to international organizations and non-governmental organizations to carry out activities to prevent, mitigate, and address gender-based violence in humanitarian crises.
(2) PROGRAMMING EFFORTS.—The Secretary shall support efforts to prevent, mitigate, and address gender-based violence through Safe from the Start programs, including the following efforts:

(A) Building technical capacity of humanitarian response actors to prevent and respond to GBV, and improve their ability to deploy skilled gender advisors, conduct rapid gender analyses, and effectively coordinate on GBV mitigation measures across humanitarian response activities;

(B) Ensuring quality protection for GBV survivors and those at-risk of GBV at the onset of the emergency, including medical and psychosocial health, education, livelihoods, legal, shelter, and sanitation services;

(C) Promoting women’s and girls’ leadership and participation in humanitarian response activities, including the design, implementation, and evaluation of humanitarian responses.

(D) Increasing and improving empowerment activities for survivors of GBV, including women’s and girls’ access to economic opportunities and livelihoods, education and skills, and leadership roles.
(E) Building and improving international standards and evidence-based best practices with respect to gender-based violence prevention, monitoring, and response, through support to evaluations, research, and the development of innovative new practices.

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

(G) Improving and strengthening guidelines, toolkits, reporting mechanisms, and other institutional response and accountability measures in order to incorporate effective GBV prevention and mitigation activities across all humanitarian assistance programs and projects.

(H) Safeguarding against sexual exploitation or abuse by humanitarian personnel by prioritizing activities that ensure that Federal employees and contractors delivering United States humanitarian assistance are equipped to address sexual exploitation and abuse in settings of humanitarian aid delivery, including by strengthening guidelines, training, reporting mechanisms, and remedies that both recognize and address the risks within the humanitarian
aid context that can create vulnerabilities for sexual exploitation and abuse.

(3) PROGRAMMING IMPROVEMENT OF PROTECTION MECHANISMS.—The Secretary shall improve the delivery and quality of United States assistance to protect survivors of gender-based violence, through the Safe from the Start programming described in subsection (b), by improving assistance activities, including activities carried out under the Safe from the Start program, in the following areas:

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

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

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

(iii) hygiene and dignity kits.

(B) Service delivery to hard-to-reach populations, prioritizing services that reach—

(i) survivors of natural disasters;

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

(iii) active conflict zones; and
(iv) refugees and IDPs living in urban areas.

(4) IMPROVING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.—The Secretary shall support global efforts to develop tools to improve institutional response and accountability measures in order to incorporate effective gender-based violence prevention and response activities across all humanitarian assistance programs and projects, including through—

(A) the promotion of minimum standards, indicators, and metrics to guide GBV mitigation efforts and to assess the adequacy of humanitarian interventions relating to gender-based violence;

(B) the establishment and implementation of standards, protocols, and accountability mechanisms for preventing and addressing sexual exploitation or abuse perpetrated by personnel delivering humanitarian assistance; and

(C) the development of monitoring tools across all humanitarian assistance programming to standardize monitoring and accountability relating to gender-based violence prevention and response.
(5) Capacity Building Support.—The Secretary shall provide support for capacity-building of organizations seeking to prevent, mitigate, and address gender-based violence, including by—

(A) building capacity of on-the-ground organizations to recognize, prevent, and address gender-based violence in humanitarian settings and to support survivors and those at risk, including through training and deploying female humanitarian aid workers;

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

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

(D) promoting supportive partnerships between local humanitarian actors and nongovernmental organizations, including for women’s leadership and participation in humanitarian response; and

(E) training for nongovernmental providers of international development assistance during
the onset and subsequent phases of a humanitarian crisis, so that such providers are equipped to continue relief, recovery, and reconstruction work that is sensitive to the prevention and mitigation of gender-based violence after the immediate humanitarian engagement has finished.

(c) **Reports Required.**—

(1) **Progress Report.**—

   (A) In general.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the progress made by the United States through Safe from the Start programs, to prevent, mitigate, and address gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies.

   (B) Elements.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall include each of the following:

   (i) An aggregation and examination of data and research regarding the key drivers of gender-based violence during human-
itarian emergencies, the critical needs of survivors or those at risk of such violence, and successful program models to address, prevent, and mitigate such violence.

(ii) A detailed description of the programs, diplomatic efforts, and other activities undertaken by the United States to implement the Safe from the Start programming focus described in subsection (b), including specific descriptions of—

(I) the steps taken to integrate prevention, mitigation, and response to gender-based violence into the delivery of humanitarian assistance, the development of humanitarian standards, and responses to specific humanitarian crises;

(II) the progress made, as of the date of the submission of the report, toward achieving specific objectives, metrics, and indicators for implementation of Safe from the Start programming, disaggregated where appropriate by gender, age, and type of violence;
(III) a list of the projects funded or supported through the Safe from the Start programming focus, with specific details on levels of funding or assistance and impacts of such projects, disaggregated where appropriate by gender, age, and type of violence;

(IV) an assessment of the extent to which consultations with non-governmental organizations, including local actors, and intergovernmental actors, have led to the development of programs, standards, and interventions to combat gender-based violence;

(V) a list of the policies or programs implemented by international or multilateral organizations receiving funding from the United States Government to improve capacity and internal protocols to identify signs of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and integrate initiatives to prevent, mitigate and address gender-based violence.
into all programs of the organization;
and

(VI) a description of any diplomatic action taken bilaterally, multilaterally, or with international organizations to encourage international organizations and the governments of other countries to adopt policies to prevent, mitigate, and address gender-based violence in emergency situations.

(C) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—In developing the report required by subparagraph (A), the Secretary of State and Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall consult with the Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees, and Migration of the Department of State and the Assistant Administrator for the Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

(D) FORM.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex. The unclassified portion of such report shall
concurrently be published on a publicly available website of the Department of State.

(2) **BUDGET REPORT.**—Not later than 120 days after the submission of each budget submitted to Congress by the President under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a budget crosscut report that—

(A) displays the budget proposed, including any planned interagency or intra-agency transfer, for each of the principal Federal agencies that will be carrying out activities through the Safe from the Start programming focus described in subsection (b)(1) in the fiscal year for which such budget is submitted;

(B) separately reports the amount of funding to be provided pertaining to Safe from the Start activities authorized pursuant to subsection (b)(1), to the extent such plans are available; and

(C) to the extent practicable, identifies all assistance and research expenditures at the account level in each of the five previous fiscal
years by the Federal Government using Federal funds for Safe from the Start activities.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

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

(B) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated $140,000,000 for each fiscal year to carry out this section.