

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4097

To require a report on the participation of Afghan women in negotiations and dialogue relating to the Afghan peace process and a strategy for post-conflict engagement by the United States in Afghanistan, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 30, 2019

Mr. KEATING (for himself, Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. FRANKEL, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To require a report on the participation of Afghan women in negotiations and dialogue relating to the Afghan peace process and a strategy for post-conflict engagement by the United States in Afghanistan, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Afghan Women’s In-
5 clusion in Negotiations Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The Women, Peace, and Security Act of
2 2017 was signed into law on October 6, 2017, re-
3 quiring the United States Government to promote
4 the meaningful participation of women in all aspects
5 of overseas conflict prevention, management, and
6 resolution, and postconflict relief and recovery ef-
7 forts.

8 (2) The meaningful participation of women in
9 peace negotiations has been shown to make resulting
10 peace agreements 35 percent more likely to last, ac-
11 cording to the International Peace Institute, and
12 their sustained engagement and leadership in con-
13 flict prevention and conflict resolution processes
14 helps to promote more inclusive and democratic soci-
15 eties and is critical to the long-term stability of
16 countries and regions.

17 (3) The United States National Security Strat-
18 egy states, “governments that fail to treat women
19 equally do not allow their societies to reach their po-
20 tential” and “societies that empower women to par-
21 ticipate fully in civic and economic life are more
22 prosperous and peaceful”.

23 (4) Today, millions of Afghan women have
24 voted in elections and women have a significant
25 presence in the National Assembly, ministries, local

1 government, and the diplomatic corps including as
2 Afghanistan's Ambassador to the United States.

3 (5) According to the United States Institute of
4 Peace, more than 68,000 Afghan women are em-
5 ployed in schools and universities, and at least
6 10,000 women are doctors and health care profes-
7 sionals.

8 (6) Afghan women entrepreneurs have invested
9 an estimated \$77 million in their businesses, cre-
10 ating 77,000 jobs for Afghans.

11 (7) In 2015, Afghanistan approved a National
12 Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security to in-
13 crease women's participation in peace processes and
14 the security sector as well as address issues around
15 protection and relief and recovery services.

16 (8) In 2018, Afghanistan reaffirmed its Law to
17 Eliminate Violence Against Women.

18 (9) Afghan women have advocated relentlessly
19 for peace, equality, and basic rights under the
20 Taliban, including by educating the next generation
21 of Afghans in underground schools and successfully
22 negotiating with the Taliban to reopen girls' schools,
23 release hostages, and prevent violence.

24 (10) Afghan women participated in the 2001
25 Bonn International Conference on Afghanistan, par-

1 participated alongside then-President Karzai at the
2 2010 National Consultative Peace Jirga on reconcili-
3 ation between the Afghan government and insurgent
4 leaders, served on the country’s Provincial Peace
5 Councils, and today serve on Afghanistan’s High
6 Peace Council.

7 (11) Through various coalitions, women have
8 mobilized to demand an immediate ceasefire and
9 their rightful seat at the table including through ral-
10 lies and consultations with communities across all of
11 Afghanistan’s provinces, including a “Peace Consult-
12 ative Loya Jirga” which brought together politi-
13 cians, tribal elders, and other prominent leaders to
14 decide on a common approach for peace talks with
15 the Taliban.

16 (12) Over the first seven rounds of bilateral
17 talks between the United States and the Taliban,
18 neither the Afghan Government nor Afghan women
19 or civil society groups were permitted to participate
20 in the negotiations.

21 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

22 It is the sense of Congress that—

23 (1) corresponding with the Women, Peace, and
24 Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–68) and the
25 U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security, the

1 United States has a commitment to promoting the
2 meaningful participation of women throughout the
3 Afghan peace process;

4 (2) representatives of Afghan women, youth,
5 and other marginalized groups from rural and urban
6 provinces and especially from those most affected by
7 violence, should meaningfully participate and engage
8 in all peace talks, implementation commissions, and
9 other bodies if an agreement is reached, alongside
10 the Government of Afghanistan, the Afghan political
11 opposition, and the Taliban, and that their security
12 must be protected throughout and their concerns
13 prioritized in those respective agendas;

14 (3) training and gender expertise should be
15 made available to the United States mediators of the
16 peace talks and all participating delegations, includ-
17 ing one or more gender advisors with expertise in
18 structuring inclusive peace process and conflict me-
19 diation, and who have local language skills and me-
20 diation expertise to establish a safe communication
21 channel for engagement with and training of a di-
22 verse range of Afghan women's groups;

23 (4) financial, technical, and logistical support,
24 including security precautions for their protection,
25 should be provided to women delegates to the talks,

1 mediators, peace builders, and stakeholders, enabling
2 them to travel safely to and from the location of the
3 peace talks and to meaningfully participate; and

4 (5) a component of any international aid pack-
5 age that is awarded to Afghanistan as part of the
6 peace process should be directed to programming fo-
7 cused on gender equality and women's empower-
8 ment, including for efforts to ensure that implemen-
9 tation of the peace agreement is shaped by gender
10 analysis, and that funds are made available as
11 grants for local Afghan women-led and women's em-
12 powerment organizations as well as for education
13 and necessary services for women and girls.

14 **SEC. 4. REPORT.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall sub-
16 mit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House
17 of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Rela-
18 tions of the Senate not later than 30 days after the conclu-
19 sion of each round of negotiations relating to the Afghan
20 peace process an unclassified report, which may contain
21 a classified annex, relating to the peace process.

22 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report re-
23 quired by subsection (a) shall include information, in ac-
24 cordance with the requirements of the Women, Peace, and
25 Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–68), on—

1 (1) the participation of Afghan women and the
2 protection of their rights and gains;

3 (2) the actions of the Department of State and
4 other relevant Federal departments and agencies to
5 advance the priorities described in section 3, includ-
6 ing United States efforts to consult with and train
7 local women-led civil society organizations and to ad-
8 vocate for their inclusion and participation in na-
9 tional, provincial, and community-level peacebuild-
10 ing, conflict prevention, and post-conflict reconcili-
11 ation.

12 **SEC. 5. STRATEGY FOR POST-CONFLICT ENGAGEMENT BY**
13 **THE UNITED STATES IN AFGHANISTAN.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in con-
15 sultation with the Administrator of the United States
16 Agency for International Development and other relevant
17 Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to the
18 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-
19 tives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Sen-
20 ate not later than 120 days after a final Afghan Reconcili-
21 ation Agreement is reached, a strategy for post-conflict
22 engagement by the United States in Afghanistan to sup-
23 port the implementation of commitments for women and
24 girls' inclusion and empowerment in the Agreement, as

1 well as to protect and promote basic human rights in Af-
2 ghanistan, especially the human rights of women and girls.

3 (b) REQUIRED ELEMENTS.—The Secretary of State
4 shall seek to ensure that activities carried out under the
5 strategy—

6 (1) employ rigorous monitoring and evaluation
7 methodologies, including ex-post evaluation, and gen-
8 der analysis as defined by the Women’s Entrepre-
9 neurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018
10 (Public Law 115–428) and required by the U.S.
11 Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security;

12 (2) disaggregate all data collected and reported
13 by age, gender, marital and motherhood status, dis-
14 ability, and urbanity, to the extent practicable and
15 appropriate; and

16 (3) adhere to the Policy Guidance on Promoting
17 Gender Equality of the Department of State and the
18 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy
19 of the United States Agency for International Devel-
20 opment.

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