



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Center for Health and Gender Equity Applauds Introduction of Global Health, Empowerment and Rights (HER) Act to end Global Gag Rule

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE) issued the following statement applauding the introduction of the Global Health, Empowerment and Rights (HER) Act by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY), and 150 House and 45 Senate members who cosponsored the bill.

Statement from Serra Sippel, president of CHANGE:

“The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE) commends Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY), and 150 House and 45 Senate members for introducing and cosponsoring the Global Health, Empowerment and Rights (HER) Act, which, if enacted, would end the dangerous and inhumane Global Gag Rule. By forcing health care providers to withhold information about legal health services, the Global Gag Rule violates the trusted relationships between a woman and her provider – sometimes at the cost of her life. The policy has had devastating consequences, including an increase in unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortions. It has also harmed efforts to provide HIV and AIDS treatment, cervical cancer screenings, and other essential health services. It is time to permanently and legislatively end the Global Gag Rule once and for all. CHANGE looks forward to championing the Global HER Act toward that end and is proud to be among nearly 170 domestic and global organizations from a wide variety of sectors that oppose the Global Gag Rule.”

Background

The Global HER Act was originally introduced one day after President Trump reinstated and expanded the Global Gag Rule in January 2017 by Sen. Shaheen, Rep. Lowey, and an unprecedented number of original cosponsors (including 47 senators and 163 representatives).

The legislation would permanently end the Global Gag Rule. The Global HER Act would remove eligibility restrictions on recipients of U.S. foreign assistance and guarantee that U.S. foreign assistance prioritizes women’s health.



The Global HER Act would also:

- Ensure that eligible foreign NGOs operating U.S.-supported health programs abroad can use their own, non-U.S. funds to provide legal health services to women.
- Guarantee that foreign NGOs will not be forced to sacrifice their right to free speech to participate in U.S.-supported programs abroad.
- Help expand access to health programs around the world so that we continue to make progress on raising health and development outcomes for entire families, communities, and the Global South.

CHANGE will continue to monitor the status of the bill.

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CHANGE is a U.S.-based nongovernmental organization that promotes sexual and reproductive health and rights as a means to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, by shaping the public's conversation, elevating women's voices, and influencing U.S. and global policies. We are guided by our vision of a world that respects, protects, and honors sexual and reproductive rights for all. Our work is grounded in and driven by a human rights framework at the intersection of multiple sectors including women's rights, human rights, family planning, maternal health, HIV and AIDS, and gender-based violence.