

Global Democracy Promotion Act of 2011 [H.R. 2639]

July 2011

Introduced: House of Representatives—July 25, 2011

Lead Sponsor: Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY)

Legislative Goal and Effect

Provides that the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act cannot impose eligibility restrictions on international recipients of U.S. aid that would be illegal if imposed nationally. Would constitute a legislative repeal of the Mexico City Policy, also called the Global Gag Rule.

How it works

- Allows foreign organizations receiving U.S. aid to use non-U.S. funds to provide medical services that would be legal in the U.S. and are legal in the respective country, including safe abortion.
- Promotes safe, ethical medical practices by removing discriminatory restrictions on essential health care services.
- Supports democracy, civic engagement, and freedom of speech abroad.
- Allows foreign organizations receiving U.S. aid to use non-U.S. funds to address the specific needs of the population, such as HIV prevention and treatment, maternal and child health and civic engagement, so long as these activities would be legal in the U.S. and are legal in the respective country.
- Nullifies any existing U.S. law or policy that interferes with these provisions. Removes restrictions that limit civic engagement.

Why it is important

Passage of the Global Democracy Promotion Act guarantees that U.S. foreign aid promotes health care that is free from stigma and discrimination. It guarantees that U.S. foreign assistance is consistent with the fundamental principles of the United States. The act would prevent restrictions on comprehensive reproductive health care that would be illegal in the U.S., including restrictions on HIV/AIDS programs and safe abortion services. The act upholds a patient's right to informed choice and the right of organizations to express their beliefs.

What you can do

- Contact your representative or senator and urge him/her to cosponsor H.R. 2639.
- Write a letter to the editor asking your representative or senator to cosponsor H.R. 2639.
- For further information, contact Deepika Allana, Senior Public Policy Associate, Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), at (202) 393-5930 or at dallana@genderhealth.org