



Summary

U.S. Commitment to Global Child Survival Act of 2007 (H.R. 2266 / S. 1418)

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The State of Global Child Health

Every year, nearly 10 million children under age five die, mostly from preventable and treatable diseases.

- More than 26,000 children die every day. Pneumonia, diarrhea and complications during childbirth are leading causes of death. Malnutrition is an underlying contributor in over half of these deaths.
- 4 million newborns die in the first 4 weeks of life (40 percent of under-5 deaths).
- 98 percent of under-5 deaths occur in 60 developing countries.

Proven, cost-effective interventions can save the lives of millions of children per year.

- Immunization interventions still do not reach 30 million children, despite success in immunizations in reducing polio, tetanus, and measles. Measles and tetanus still kill more than 1 million children under 5 each year.
- Vitamin A supplementation costs only \$0.02 cents for each capsule and given 2-3 times a year will prevent blindness and death. Although vitamin A supplementation saved an estimated 2.3 million lives between 1999 and 2004, only half of young children in poor countries receive these treatments. Between 250,000 and 500,000 children become blind every year, with 70 percent of them dying within 12 months.
- Oral rehydration therapy (ORT) has helped to reduce diarrhea deaths by half, saving an estimated 1 million lives annually; yet more than 2 million children still die from diarrhea-related causes each year.
- Essential newborn care - including immunizing mothers against tetanus, ensuring clean delivery practices in a hygienic birthing environment, drying and wrapping the baby immediately after birth, providing necessary warmth, and promoting immediate and continued breastfeeding, immunization, and treatment of infections with antibiotics - could save the lives of 3 million newborns annually.

- Improved sanitation and access to clean drinking water can reduce childhood infections and diarrhea. Over 40 percent of the world's population does not have access to basic sanitation, and more than one billion people use unsafe sources of drinking water.

United States leadership saves lives.

- The significant commitment of the United States to reducing child mortality in the developing world contributed to a 50 percent reduction in the mortality of children under the age of 5 between 1960 and 1990.
- Despite this success, funding for maternal and child health programs has declined 20 percent in real terms since 1997.

What the Global Child Survival Act Would Do

To restore United States leadership in improving the health of newborns, children, and mothers, the Act would:

- Authorize increased funding to expand child and maternal health interventions, including \$600 million in FY 2008, \$900 million for FY 2009, \$1.2 billion for FY 2010, and \$1.6 billion for FY 2011 and 2012.
- Continue investments in proven, cost-effective international child and maternal health programs, including the Global Vaccines Initiative and UNICEF.
- Require the United States Government to develop an integrated strategy for supporting the improvement of child and maternal health.
- Create a U.S. Government interagency Child and Maternal Health Task Force to coordinate activities directed toward achieving child and maternal health goals.
- Set out guidelines for child survival programs, including building local capacity and self-sufficiency, partnerships with non-governmental organizations, participation by local communities, and coordination with other donors.
- Require the President to submit an annual report to Congress detailing U.S. efforts to promote child and maternal health and survival globally.
- Authorize a proportional expansion of the Child Survival and Health Grants Program created by Congress to help further American commitment to improving the survival and health of newborns, children, and mothers.

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