



ACTION ALERT

The Washington Office of Public Policy and Collaborative Partner, Women Thrive Worldwide, Welcome the New Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009

Women Thrive Worldwide has commended Congressman Howard Berman (D-CA), chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, and Congressman Mark Kirk (R-IL), for introducing the Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009 (HR 2139), which puts down a marker for a major overhaul of U.S. assistance, and urges speedy passage of this bipartisan legislation through the House of Representatives.

The bill requires the Obama Administration to create a National Strategy for Global Development as was called for by the HELP Commission, a bipartisan review of foreign assistance carried out in the last Congress. Such a strategy would provide a rationale and roadmap for U.S. foreign assistance over the long term, ensuring a more strategic, coordinated and effective use of assistance dollars—the kind of “smart power” supported by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

HR 2139 mandates the establishment of better systems for accountability, transparency, and monitoring and evaluation for foreign assistance. The bill also elevates development as one of the three “D’s” of U.S. foreign policy, along with diplomacy and defense.

HR 2139 supports the principle of gender equality and requires measurable performance goals, including gender-sensitive goals, in evaluating the success or failure of foreign assistance.

The bill is an important first step in the process of modernizing and revamping U.S. foreign assistance programs. The Washington Office of Public Policy and Women Thrive Worldwide support this effort and believe it is crucial to improving the effectiveness of U.S. efforts to reduce poverty worldwide, especially for women and girls.



More than 40 years have passed since the United States first created its foreign assistance framework, and the world has changed dramatically. New global challenges such as HIV and AIDS, climate change, and rising food and energy costs undermine our efforts to tackle poverty in developing countries and build a more equitable world. Ask your Representative to support the new Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009 (HR 2139)!

Read *The Book of Resolutions 2008* #3445. The Status of Women, pg. 526.

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UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK

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