

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Congress Introduces Resolution to End Violence Against Children Worldwide**

*Co-authored by the Ending Violence Against Children Taskforce, resolution marks universal approach to addressing violence against children and youth globally, a first for Congress*

**Washington, D.C.** – The Ending Violence Against Children Taskforce commends Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX) for today introducing H. Res. 910, which calls for increasing and improving the United States Government’s efforts to end violence against children. Written with input by the Taskforce, the resolution condemns all forms of violence against children and youth globally – including physical, mental, and sexual violence, neglect, abuse, maltreatment and exploitation.

The bill is part of a multi-year advocacy effort led by the Ending Violence Against Children Taskforce, which includes ChildFund International, Futures Without Violence, Save the Children and World Vision, to address violence against children and youth. Recent meetings between the Taskforce organizations and members of Congress galvanized the support and ultimate introduction of the resolution.

According to the World Health Organization, the global prevalence of violence finds more than one billion children worldwide are exposed to violence in their homes, schools and other places that are supposed to be safe. When violence is unaddressed, it damages children’s learning, behavior, and health across a lifespan. Violence against children undermines our development efforts across the globe. In schools, 246 million boys and girls experience gender-based violence, with girls at a higher risk of sexual violence, harassment and exploitation. School related gender-based violence is a major obstacle to ensuring all girls access basic education. Around the world, nearly one in three adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 have been a victim of violence.

The Ending Violence Against Children resolution also calls on Congress to recognize the economic consequences of violence against children and youth. The global economic impact of physical, psychological and sexual violence against children may be as high as \$7 trillion, or 8 percent of the world’s GDP. The economic costs of child labor amount to between 2.4 and 6.6 percent of the world’s gross national income annually.

“Congress’s commitment to helping children comes at a critical time in the international community’s response to the violence that innocent children endure around the world,” said Congressman Jim McGovern. “Our bipartisan resolution not only outlines the immense problem faced by too many children across the world, but it also makes the case for increased leadership by Congress that is aligned with growing global attention to the issue. I look forward to working with my colleague, Rep. Ted Poe, to be a champion in the House of Representatives and secure the strong support this issue deserves.”

The World Health Organization, along with the Centers for Disease Control, the President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief, United States Agency for International Development, the World Bank and others developed INSPIRE, a package of evidence-based interventions to reduce rates of violence against children. The coordinated approach adopts common metrics and indicators that can be used by U.S. government agencies to monitor progress to prevent, address and end violence against children and youth globally.

“As a former judge and prosecutor, I’ve seen thousands of victims of crime and violence come across my bench,” said Congressman Ted Poe. “Violence against children is not just a domestic problem, but an international issue. We must do everything in our power to increase our commitment to ensuring that children around the world can live in a safe environment, without having to endure violence in any form. This legislation gives our promise to the international community and is a win for children and youth across the globe.”

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**ChildFund International** partners with communities throughout Asia, Africa and the Americas – including the United States – to create lasting, positive change for children. Our programs address the underlying conditions that prevent children and youth from achieving their full potential. Last year, we reached almost 18 million children and family members. Approximately 200,000 Americans support our work by sponsoring individual children or investing in ChildFund programs. Within the U.S. government, we advocate to elevate and advance the issues of international child protection and child well-being across U.S. foreign assistance policy and funding priorities. Find out more at [www.childfund.org](http://www.childfund.org).

**Futures Without Violence** is a health and social justice nonprofit with a simple mission: to heal those among us who are traumatized by violence today – and to create healthy families and communities free of violence tomorrow. From domestic violence and child abuse, to bullying and sexual assault, our groundbreaking programs, policy development, and public action campaigns are designed to prevent and end violence against women and children around the world. To learn more please visit [www.futureswithoutviolence.org](http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org).

**World Vision** is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender. For more information, please visit [www.WorldVision.org/media](http://www.WorldVision.org/media) or follow us on Twitter @WorldVisionUSA.

**Save the Children** believes every child deserves a future. In the United States and around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children’s unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach. We do whatever it takes for children—every day and in times of crisis—transforming their lives and the future we share. In 2016, Save the Children reached more than 157 million children, including more than 56 million children directly. We worked in 120 countries, including the United States, where we reached 683,000 children. [www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org).