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Children’s Voices Played a Part in Passage of the READ Act

Richmond, Va. (September 21, 2017) – ChildFund International celebrates last week’s signing into law of HR 601, the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act, legislation that seeks to improve education worldwide.

Since its founding in 1938, ChildFund has worked to ensure that children in the world’s poorest places have access to education. The bipartisan READ Act mandates a global commitment to education for all children worldwide and emphasizes enhanced quality and accountability, even in emergencies and conflict. ChildFund applauds the long-standing commitment to the content of the legislation, originally introduced in 2004 as the Education for All Act and reintroduced by representatives Lowey and Reichert in the House and senators Rubio and Durbin in the Senate.

“I am thrilled that the U.S. government has affirmed the vital importance of children’s right to learn,” said Anne Lynam Goddard, ChildFund’s president and CEO. “Regardless of the circumstances they are born into, children themselves know the value of education. Last spring, I traveled with eight young people from one of the poorest counties in Mississippi to Capitol Hill. They told their representatives in Congress that the READ Act was important to them because all children deserve a chance to reach their potential. Their advocacy paid off, and I am proud of them.”

In Mississippi, on hearing the news of the signing, 17-year-old Zion said, “I feel ecstatic — knowing that something I had hands on personally, hearing months later that it’s been passed through, is really great. It’s really motivating, knowing that something I did helped!”

Goddard added, “We are excited to see that young people from across our programs — from Mississippi to Uganda — are urging their governments to prioritize children’s safety and well-being. And it’s working.”

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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.

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