

## Message Guide for the Girls LEAD Act

### Elevator Pitch

**Problem:** From the moment they're born, girls and boys face unequal expectations and access to resources and opportunities. This limits girls' potential.

Facts to support this statement (pick one or two):

- A girl under 18 gets married every 3 seconds.
- Girls are 2 times more likely than boys to never set foot in a classroom.
- Globally, every 10 minutes, an adolescent girl dies as a result of violence.
- Women are underrepresented at all levels of government globally. If women's representation in political life increases at the current slow pace, we won't reach gender parity in government for 95 years.

**Solution:** To build a more equal and inclusive future, we need to start addressing these issues with girls in their childhood. When we support girls' empowerment, we build more stable democracies and economies. We also reduce violence against girls and increase their educational opportunities.

**Strategy:** A bill in Congress called the Girls Leadership, Engagement, Agency and Development (LEAD) Act would help address these challenges by better targeting foreign aid to programs that promote girls' civic engagement.

### Ask:

- **For lawmakers:** Will you cosponsor the Girls LEAD Act?
- **For the general public:** Will you sign a postcard to help improve the lives of girls around the world?

### Question for Candidates

I am a youth advocate with Save the Children Action Network. I attend school every day, I live in relative safety, and have met with my political representatives. Millions of girls worldwide aren't allowed the same opportunities I've had. In fact, girls around the world are two times more likely never to set foot in a classroom and a girl under 18 gets married every three seconds.

A bill in Congress called the Girls LEAD Act would help address these challenges by better targeting foreign aid to programs that promote girls civic engagement. Is this a bill that you will support?

## Tricky Questions and How to Respond to Them

### 1. **What about boys?**

When we talk about gender equality we are not just talking about girls and women. Boys and men are essential to efforts to build a more equal future. Boys face harmful social norms and expectations that limit their choices, too. Including boys in discussions about gender equality and changing gender norms will not only empower girls but improve boys' lives as well.

The GIRLS LEAD Act will also increase boys' opportunities for civic and political engagement. It focuses on all children, but places a special emphasis on girls because they are the ones that are most excluded.

### 2. **What about girls in the U.S.?**

Save the Children Action Network works with youth in the U.S. through our youth engagement programs. I'm a [Student Ambassador/club member] at [school] and we receive training to learn how to be powerful advocates for kids. The majority of our Student Ambassadors are girls and young women and SCAN partners with us to build their civic engagement and leadership skills.

### 3. **I think we should focus on kids in the U.S. Why should I care about girls' empowerment overseas?**

Empowering girls around the world helps the U.S. as well. Gender equal societies are more stable, safe and prosperous, with happier, better-educated citizens. Building stronger communities result in stronger economies, which can open the door to more trade for the U.S., and more peaceful countries, which is good for everyone.