



**Senator Paul Simon**  
**WATER FOR THE WORLD ACT of 2011 (S. 641)**

**THE WATER, SANITATION AND HEALTH CRISIS**

- **884 million** people live without access to safe water.
- Every year, **1.4 million children die** due to water-related diseases caused by a lack of access to safe water and improved sanitation. That amounts to around **4,000 deaths a day** or **one every 20 seconds**.
- Unsafe drinking water and poor sanitation account for nearly **10% of the global burden of disease**.
- **No sub-Saharan African country** is on-track to meet the sanitation Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving the proportion of people without sanitation between 1990 and 2015. At current rates of progress, **it will not be met until 2076** – 61 years too late.

**THE US RESPONSE**

**Building on the Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005 (PL 109-121)**, the Water for the World Act (S. 641) was introduced in March 2011 with bipartisan support. The bill aims to **provide 100 million people** with “first-time access to safe drinking water and sanitation on a sustainable basis” by:

- **Targeting high-priority countries** – the world’s poorest countries and communities in which the need for increased access to water and sanitation is greatest and where support stands to have the greatest impacts across equity, health and development objectives – with **focused programs and policies** designed to help alleviate water- and sanitation- related challenges.
- Fostering **international cooperation** on freshwater issues with other nations and multilateral organizations through key diplomatic, development, and scientific efforts.
- Establishing programs in high-priority countries to help **augment the ability of local institutions and officials** responsible for water and sanitation, ensuring sustainability and local ownership.
- Enhance the **capacities of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US State Department** to ensure the effective implementation of country-specific clean water and sanitation programs and policies and the inclusion of transboundary water-related issues in US foreign policy.
- **Increase integration of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programs with other critical interventions**, such as child survival, HIV/AIDS, food security and nutrition, to increase the efficiency and impact of all, including through the development of a comprehensive WASH strategy.

## THE IMPACT

This bill would...

- **Improve existing US international development programs** seeking to address the water and sanitation crisis, making the investments more impactful and efficient without requiring new funding for greater benefit.
- **Ensure that US funds are being used where they are most needed** and most likely to have positive impacts on health, economic development, women's empowerment, and other critical goals.
- **Leverage ongoing US leadership in international development**, including water and sanitation, by increasing our strategic partnerships, coordination and learning.
- Help **reach the sanitation MDG** to halve the proportion of people with access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.
- **Reduce Child Mortality** by ensuring the safety and cleanliness of water sources in targeted countries.
- **Enhance** the impact of the President's **Global Health** and **Feed the Future Initiatives**.
- **Prevent future political and social turmoil** by ensuring that water-related issues are a top diplomatic and development priority.

## ABOUT WATERAID

WaterAid's vision is of a world in which **everyone has access to safe water and sanitation**. Together with improved hygiene, these basic human rights underpin health, education and livelihoods, forming the first essential step in **overcoming poverty**. We work with local partners, who understand local issues, and provide them with the skills and support to **help communities set up and manage practical and sustainable projects** that meet their real needs. We also work locally and internationally to change policy and practice and ensure that water, hygiene and sanitation's vital role in reducing poverty is recognized.

- Since 1981, we have reached **15.89 million people** with **safe water**.
- Since 2004, we have reached **11.02 million people** with **sanitation**.
- In 2010/11 we reached **1.45 million people** with safe water and **1.62 million people** with sanitation.