

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

August 17, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write with great urgency about the rapidly deteriorating situation in Afghanistan. We are gravely concerned for the many people – U.S. citizens, Afghan allies and their families, women, NGO employees, journalists, and so many others – stuck in Afghanistan fearing for their lives and the future of the country. It is this Administration’s moral obligation to leverage all available resources to help as many people as possible to safety in the United States. There is no time to waste.

As a country, we need to do everything we can to evacuate those eligible for Special Immigrant Visas and for the Priority-2 program. But we can’t stop there. So many are in danger because of their association with the United States and allies, including the families of our allies, journalists, NGO employees, and so many more.

Our offices are working diligently and around the clock to help those fleeing Afghanistan. In doing so, we stand ready to assist the Department of State, Department of Defense, and other relevant agencies as they work to help the many in Afghanistan who have been left behind, including helping our constituents and those reaching out on how to work through this bureaucracy. But our staff cannot adequately do this without a clear understanding of the process and plan currently underway.

Therefore, we urge a timely response to the following questions:

- How are the Department of State, Department of Defense, and other relevant U.S. agencies prioritizing evacuation for individuals who qualify and currently hold Special Immigrant Visas, their families, and others who are at risk, including journalists, NGO employees, and others? How do these agencies define “at risk” in terms of eligibility?
- Activists working to advance the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, a core element of our mission in Afghanistan, are now being specifically targeted and their lives potentially at risk for their work. Does the Administration consider these women to be “at risk?” How are the Department of State, Department of Defense, and other relevant U.S.

agencies working to ensure the safety of women human rights defenders and how will women human rights defenders be evacuated?

- How are the relevant agencies contacting the aforementioned individuals to communicate next steps in evacuation plans?
- What is the plan to evacuate individuals not currently prioritized?
- How does the Administration plan to grant humanitarian parole to family members of U.S Citizens and legal permanent residents that have pending Immigrant Visa cases? Does the Administration have plans to expand humanitarian parole to additional vulnerable persons?
- How are the relevant agencies ensuring security of the Kabul airport? Do we have assurances from the Taliban that the airport will be kept secure until all U.S. citizens, Afghan allies, and other individuals attempting to leave have left?
- How are the relevant agencies reaching and planning to evacuate those that are not currently at the Kabul airport?
- What else does the Administration need from Congress to expedite evacuations of Americans, Afghan allies, and other vulnerable individuals out of Afghanistan?
- What barriers prevented the Department of State, Department of Defense, and other relevant agencies from providing Members of Congress and their staff the appropriate congressional contacts and relevant requested information in a timely manner to conduct casework inquiries?

This is a dire, humanitarian emergency that requires our immediate attention. Congress will continue to assist the Department of State, Department of Defense, and other relevant agencies in their efforts to support Americans and Afghans abroad. We urge the Administration's foresight and close coordination with our staff in the process, as well as a swift response to these questions so we can be helpful and responsive to the needs of those in harm's way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sara Jacobs', written in a cursive style.

Sara Jacobs



Ami Bera, M.D.  
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



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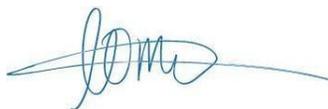
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Jennifer Wexton  
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John Yarmuth  
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CC:

Antony Blinken, Secretary  
U.S. Department of State

Lloyd Austin, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Defense

Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor