

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

August 19, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20016

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Secretary Blinken,

We write to express our urgent concern and to share our priorities to help save the lives of our Afghan allies and their families, women and girls, journalists, non-government organization employees, translators, and so many others currently stuck in Afghanistan. It should be the priority of this Administration to leverage all available resources at the Departments of Homeland Security and State to help as many people as possible relocate quickly and efficiently to the United States. The efforts the Administration has taken to date to evacuate U.S. citizens and vulnerable citizens from Afghanistan, including SIV applicants and their families, is commendable and must continue.

As our staff have been working diligently at all hours to help those fleeing Afghanistan, it has been brought to our attention that there are a number of steps the Departments of Homeland Security and State can take immediately to expedite the relocation of our Afghan allies.

First, it is imperative that the Department of Homeland Security establishes a special humanitarian parole program specifically for women leaders, activists, human rights defenders, parliamentarians, journalists, and other highly visible women currently at risk. This would allow for the immediate and efficient relocation of these extremely vulnerable women to the United States. Once such a parole program is established, women's right organizations here in the United States are prepared to quickly mobilize sponsorships for these women and their families, ensuring there will be robust legal, educational, economic, and medical support upon arrival.

Second, increased processing capacity within U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is vitally important, as well as the appointment of an interagency refugee coordinator.

Lastly, for those who are not eligible for humanitarian parole and will be making use of the Priority 1 or 2 pathways, it is essential that we work to ensure their relocation to third countries and support them upon arrival. Medical, legal, and educational support while these individuals are in third countries is incredibly important given the long application process. Unfortunately, with the Taliban in control of all of Afghanistan's border crossings, the ability for these

individuals to cross safely on their own is nearly impossible. We must take concrete steps to use the diplomatic tools at our disposal to support their safe exit from Afghanistan. The State Department should also be working with Afghanistan's neighbors to make a plan for the possibility of substantial refugee migration to those countries.

Your attention to these priority requests will help ensure the safety of our Afghan allies who desperately need our support.

Sincerely,



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



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Jennifer Wexton  
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Earl Blumenauer  
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Peter Welch  
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/s/

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

/s/

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar  
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Sara Jacobs  
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Jake Auchincloss  
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Zoe Lofgren  
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/s/

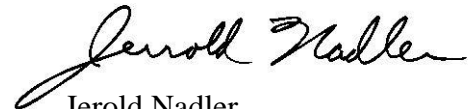
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Sheila Jackson Lee  
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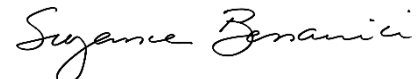
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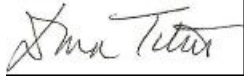
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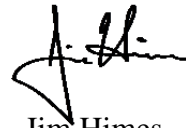
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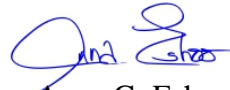
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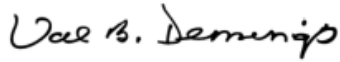
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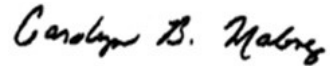
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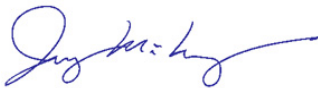
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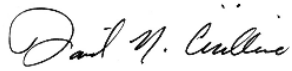
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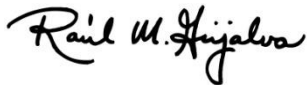
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Member of Congress



James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress



Rep. Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Ur Mendoza Jaddou, Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

CC: The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States.