

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 6, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write today to express our serious concerns over the significant and harmful impact of your executive order, *Realigning the United States Refugee Admission Program*, which halted refugee processing and admissions, and the *Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid* executive order that up-ended the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program for our Afghan allies. Together, these executive orders have eviscerated the U.S. capacity to resettle refugees and SIVs, including reunifying Afghans overseas with their families and loved ones already in the United States. Across the country, some resettlement agencies have been forced to lay off thousands of staff and cut back on basic services suddenly - just days before rent was due.

Prior to the suspension of refugee resettlement efforts, over 1,600 Afghan allies were cleared and booked on flights for travel to the United States, with approximately 10,000 more Afghan allies approved for entry and another 40,000 allies navigating the approval process. These individuals and their families sacrificed a great deal to support the American government in Afghanistan and to fight for the dream of a free and democratic Afghan Republic. To turn our backs on these allies in their time of need after they so bravely supported us betrays American values, violates our promise to protect those who assisted the U.S. mission, and belittles our reputation on the international stage.

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), the Afghan SIV program, and Afghan relocations are all vital tools for advancing U.S. foreign policy and diplomatic interests and are emblematic of our nation's values of compassion and welcome. Refugee resettlement and Afghan SIV programs make America stronger, safer, and more prosperous. Failing to uphold our promises to allies who are at risk overseas due to their support for the U.S. mission is no way to conduct foreign policy. Nor is stranding tens of thousands of refugees who have completed lengthy security screenings and have communities, families, and sponsors waiting for them in the U.S. The sudden suspension threatens global security and countless lives.

The abrupt freeze of funding for State Department-administered Reception and Placement (R&P) services for refugees and Afghan SIVs *already resettled* in the United States has compounded the harmful impact of the USRAP suspension. More than 40,000 refugees and Afghan SIVs arrived through the resettlement program to the United States since the start of FY 2025, thousands of whom remain eligible for R&P services that ensure new arrivals have access to food, housing, and help they need to restart their lives in safety.

Those Afghan allies experiencing the cruelty of these executive orders firsthand are not just numbers. They are people who sacrificed everything and have now been thrown into the most

precarious position of their lives since the fall of Kabul. Here are just a couple examples that highlight the individual impact of the Administration's actions:

- **Gul** and his wife were separated from their four young children outside Kabul airport in the chaos of the Afghan evacuation effort in August 2021. After resettling to Massachusetts under Operation Allies Welcome, they began tirelessly working to reunite with their children, who remained overseas and at risk. After being separated for almost three and a half years, the four children were booked to travel on January 23, the day after the cancellations began rolling in. Their reunification has now been indefinitely delayed. It is unconscionable that this government took an active role in prolonging their reunion.
- **Ahmed** is a refugee from Afghanistan who was actively involved in peace activism and participated in political activities sponsored by the U.S. Government. During the Afghan evacuation effort, Ahmed was evacuated to Germany due to risks to his life. He was referred for resettlement to the United States – and was conditionally approved for travel in January 2025. His dream is to pursue graduate studies in the United States and reunite with his sister in Maryland. He cannot return to Afghanistan, nor can he live in Germany long term. His only hope for stability and safety right now is to be admitted to the United States.

There are thousands of stories just like this playing out across the United States and around the world. The Administration's willful indifference to the lives impacted here is violent and it must not continue.

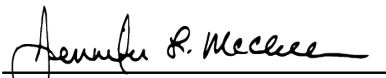
As the democratically-elected Afghan government fell to the Taliban in 2021, thousands of Afghan partners who worked with the United States suddenly found themselves exposed and vulnerable to violent retaliation. Recognizing this grave threat, the Biden-Harris Administration launched Operation Allies Refuge (OAR), which evacuated approximately 76,000 Afghan partners and their families to the United States, making it the largest non-combatant evacuation operation in American history. Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), the civilian continuation of that mission, ensured that these allies were able to receive services, legal status, and support integrating into the United States, as well as facilitated efforts to continue resettling the remaining Afghan allies left in Afghanistan during the evacuation. Once OAW ended in October 2022, efforts at the Departments of State, Health and Human Services, and Homeland Security turned to more enduring support for Afghan refugees such as continued expedited processing of SIV applications, connecting Afghan allies with long-term housing, and family reunification. The logistical feat accomplished, and the number of lives saved during OAR and OAW are an incredible testament to the ability of our government to respond quickly to a crisis and support those most in need. That is why we find your efforts to halt further resettlement of Afghan allies and families and to potentially expel those who have successfully resettled in the United States extremely alarming, shameful, and craven.

We are equally concerned about Afghan allies who were paroled into the United States during Operation Allies Refuge (OAR) and Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) and are still in the

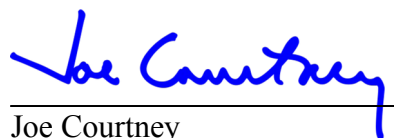
process of applying for asylum or other form of permanent protection in the United States. Due to executive orders targeting newcomers with temporary statuses, Afghans with humanitarian parole are now more vulnerable to immigrant detention and deportations. Repatriation to Afghanistan would violate principles of non-refoulement, which prohibits returning individuals to the violence and persecution they fled. Forcible repatriation would place thousands of people directly in the hands of the Taliban, and we cannot allow that to happen.


It is more important than ever that the U.S. government acts to fully restore humanitarian and refugee protections for our Afghan allies and all refugees. We must not go back on our word to support those who supported us in our time of need. We urge you to rescind - at minimum - Executive Order 14163 and Executive Order 14169, resume refugee processing and admissions, restore foreign aid funding that enables Afghan relocation efforts, and restore funding for refugee resettlement agencies that provide critical resources to Afghan allies. We also implore you to commit to protecting the tens of thousands of Afghans who were granted parole status and have begun rebuilding their lives and families across the country. It is the least we can do.

Sincerely,

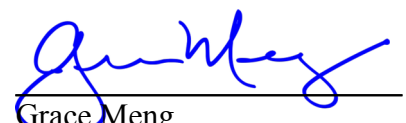

Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

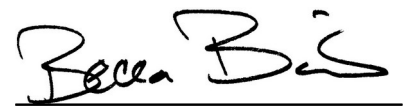

Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

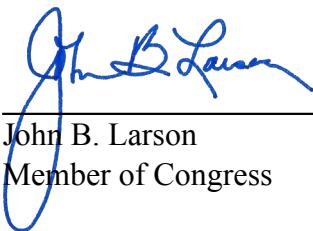

Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress


Mike Quigley
Member of Congress

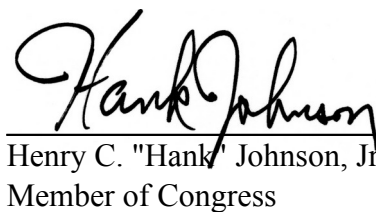

Grace Meng
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

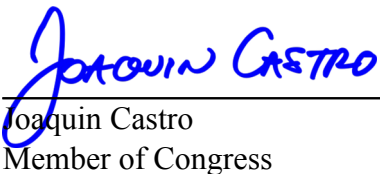

Becca Balint
Member of Congress



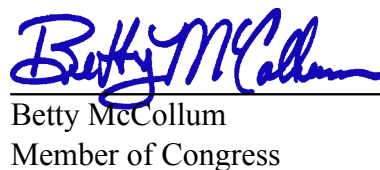
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



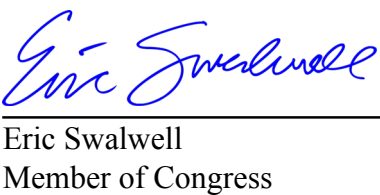
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



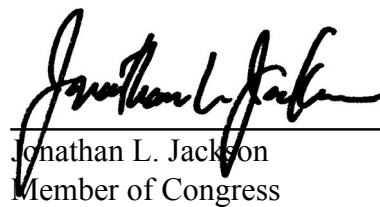
Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



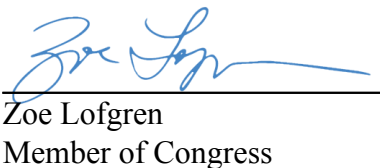
Betty McCollum
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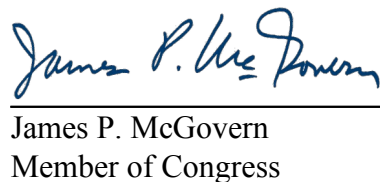
Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



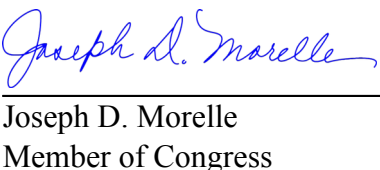
Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



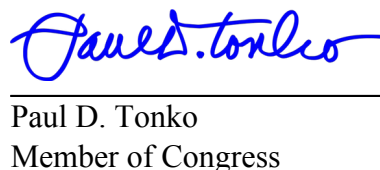
Zoe Lofgren
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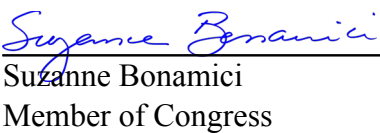
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



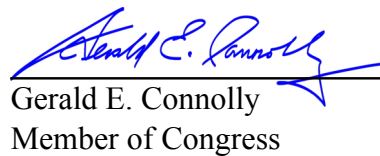
Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



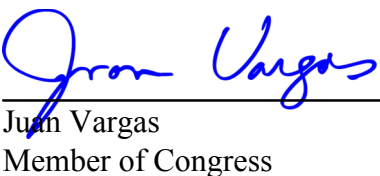
Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



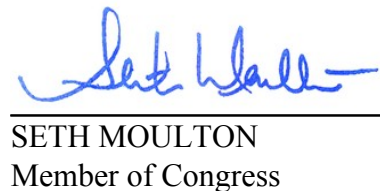
Suzanne Bonamici
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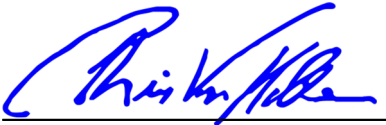
Gerald E. Connolly
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SETH MOULTON
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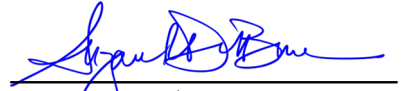
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



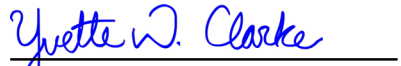
Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



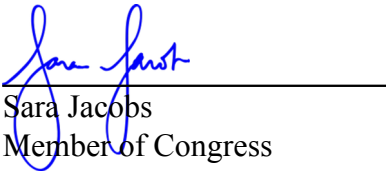
Suzan K. DelBene
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Madeleine Dean
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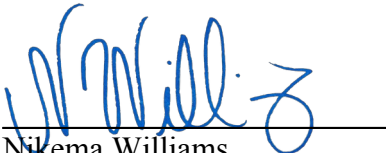
Yvette D. Clarke
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Sara Jacobs
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Stephen F. Lynch
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Nikema Williams
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Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



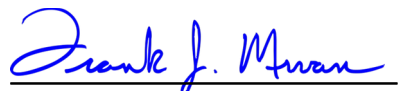
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Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Frank J. Mrvan
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



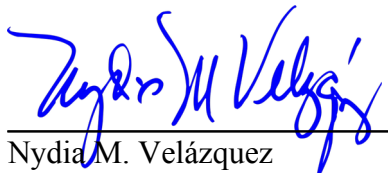
Andre Carson
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



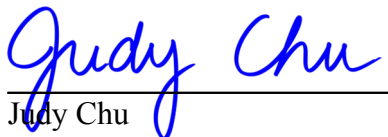
Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



George Latimer
Member of Congress



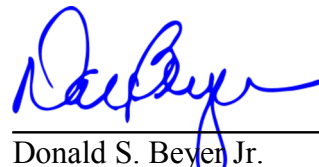
Julie Johnson
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Lizzie Fletcher
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Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
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Sarah McBride
Member of Congress