



October 6, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

Due to the Biden Administration's hasty withdrawal from Afghanistan, we maintain concerns regarding stranded Americans as well as the plan for refugee resettlement.

In an effort to establish transparency and clear expectations, please provide answers to the following unanswered questions regarding the Biden Administration's plan for refugee resettlement associated with the collapse of Afghanistan:

- (1) What steps are being taken to assist U.S. citizens and partners left behind in Afghanistan?
- (2) What is the timeline for resettling the 415 persons evacuated from Afghanistan and proposed for resettlement into Tennessee? Is this number the first group of evacuees to be resettled in Tennessee, or the complete total?
- (3) Of these 415 persons, how many are Lawful Permanent Residents, how many are Special Immigrant Visa Holders, and how many are P-1 or P-2 status? How many will be on parole status? And if you lack that information now, will you commit to providing it once it is available?
- (4) For those on parole status, what vetting has taken place before they are paroled into the United States? What vetting has not taken place in such cases? How will you ensure that any concerns that arise from such post-parole vetting can be addressed?
- (5) How is it determined whether refugee status or parole into the United States is appropriate in the case of a person who is evacuated from Afghanistan, but for whom the interagency vetting of biographical or biometric information provides no additional or corroborating information regarding the person?
- (6) What specific criteria dictate whether Afghan nationals without visa status qualify for refugee status or parole into the United States for humanitarian reasons?
- (7) An Operation Allies Refuge summary document states that: "Those that do not clear secondary processing and are found to be inadmissible are placed into ICE custody pending removal proceedings." Does that mean someone could be paroled into the United States, subsequently not clear secondary processing, and then be removed from the United States?

We all ultimately answer to the American public, and the public deserves transparency and information regarding how this resettlement process is working so that they can understand and accurately judge its efficacy. We look forward to a detailed response that addresses each of the above questions and subsequently welcome an open dialogue on these issues.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Bill Hagerty
United States Senator



Bill Lee
State of Tennessee Governor