

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 5, 2021

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

Dear Secretary Blinken:

We write to you today as members of the North Carolina Congressional Delegation to register our concern over the execution of the evacuation of Americans and Afghan allies out of Afghanistan in the lead up to the final U.S. withdrawal. Since the beginning of this foreign policy blunder, our offices have been working around the clock to assist our constituents, their families, and those they care about to safety.

As you are aware, North Carolina is home to Fort Bragg, the largest military installation in the world, as well as Camp Lejeune. This withdrawal has been increasingly difficult on our communities as thousands from each installation were deployed to Afghanistan to provide support. Tragically, two of them, Staff Sergeant Ryan C. Knauss (U.S. Army) and Sergeant Nicole L. Gee (U.S. Marine Corps), made the ultimate sacrifice in the attack on Kabul's airport.

Following the attack and subsequent withdrawal, we have become increasingly concerned with the State Department's lack of strategy to secure the safety of American citizens and Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders and applicants left behind in now Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Recent reports of planes full of Americans and Afghan SIV holders being held hostage by the Taliban at the airport have only heightened our concerns. You recently stated the State Department's limitations on continuing the evacuation without American personnel on the ground to verify identities. Because of the chaos of the evacuation, many of these people remain in danger, and the United States has little capacity to properly vet and transfer these people quickly and safely.

We respectfully request answers to the following questions and ask that the State Department provide immediate assistance and a clear plan to secure the safety of those left behind:

- Of the estimated 124,000 evacuated, how many were SIV holders and how many were American citizens? Approximately, how many SIV applicants were left stranded?
- When will Congress begin to receive detailed, case specific updates for Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) applicants for whom we have initiated inquiries, and when will we be provided with sufficient avenues to inquire and receive updates for both P-1/P-2 referrals and individuals that that have been evacuated from Kabul to third country locations?
- How many American citizens are left in Afghanistan?

We are committed to retrieving all Americans and SIVs out of harm's way and are eager to work to resolve this humanitarian and foreign policy disaster unfolding before us. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



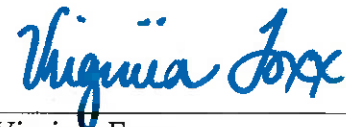
Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Richard Burr
United States Senator



Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress



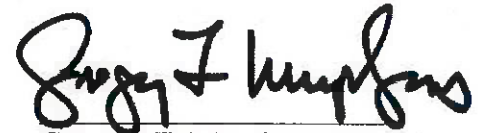
Patrick McHenry
Member of Congress



Dan Bishop
Member of Congress



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