

EVANGELICAL IMMIGRATION table.

Bethany Christian
Services

Council for Christian
Colleges and Universities

Ethics and Religious
Liberty Commission of
the
Southern Baptist
Convention

Faith and Community
Empowerment

National Association of
Evangelicals

National Latino
Evangelical Coalition

World Relief

August 17, 2021

Dear President Biden,

As the United States withdraws its military presence from Afghanistan, we are reminded of your commitment to stand with our Afghan allies who put themselves and their families at risk by standing with and supporting the mission of the United States government. In offering the opportunity for resettlement to the United States, you echoed a promise that the U.S. government has made repeatedly over the past two decades.

Despite the deteriorating situation, it is of utmost moral urgency that the U.S. government keeps our commitment, ensuring that those who qualify for Special Immigrant Visas as a result of their service to the United States are safely evacuated from Afghanistan and to a safe location for processing, along with their immediate families. We recognize and lament that it has become increasingly difficult to safely evacuate our allies. However, giving up on these brave individuals is simply not an option.

As Christians, we believe that each person is made with intrinsic value in the image of God, and we cannot treat any person's life as expendable. Our government has a particular obligation to those who are now facing threats upon their lives due to their service to the United States, and to go back on our commitment to them would be a moral failing with reverberating consequences for decades to come.

Furthermore, there are many other Afghans likely to be at risk of persecution under Taliban rule, including Christians and other religious minorities, women and girls who have pursued the opportunity for education, and others associated with the U.S. presence in Afghanistan who may not qualify for Special Immigrant Visas. The United States should do everything reasonably possible to protect these individuals and, should they make the decision that they must flee as refugees, prioritize them for resettlement to the United States. Specifically, we urgently request you increase P-2 processing of Afghan refugees to the United States. The current policy of only allowing those who are in a third country to qualify for P-2 status is untenable and does not honor their commitment and sacrifice.

To ensure that the United States is able to welcome those fleeing persecution, it is vital that the U.S. revitalize our refugee resettlement program, which should offer refuge to the most vulnerable refugees from throughout the world, including those fleeing persecution from China, Cuba, Burma and various other situations of persecution. We urge you not only to keep your commitment to set the annual

refugee ceiling at 125,000 for the coming fiscal year but also to ensure that the United States actually hits that ceiling by repairing and rebuilding the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program.

As has been true for decades, evangelical churches in the United States stand ready to welcome persecuted individuals and families resettled to their communities. We are ready to do our part, and we are praying for you as you do your part to keep our commitment to those at risk for their service to the United States and to others fleeing a credible fear of persecution globally.

Sincerely,

Evangelical Immigration Table Principal Leaders:

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