

August 23, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

On behalf of millions of America's service members, veterans, survivors, military families, and organizations dedicated to serving these communities, we urgently request a meeting with you ahead of the full evacuation of American personnel in Afghanistan to discuss fulfilling our commitment to our Afghan allies. We are thankful for your recent announcement that evacuation operations will continue beyond the original August 31 deadline if necessary, but remain concerned about the fates of our wartime partners.

Failing to meet our obligations to these Afghans would not only be a national security risk — harming America's reputation abroad and eroding the trust in our armed forces that is critical for future operations — it would also condemn veterans and survivors of the conflict in Afghanistan to a lifetime of moral injury.

We hope your efforts will not only underline that the U.S. meets its commitments, but also help veterans of this conflict avoid the pain and regret of personally making promises on behalf of our country only to have our political leadership fail to meet those commitments. The Department of Veterans Affairs' recent commendable outreach to veterans who may be undergoing acute stress as events unfold in Afghanistan is proof of your administration's understanding of its impact on our community. As a member of a military family with a deep commitment to our community through *Joining Forces*, you certainly understand our concern about such preventable moral injury.

At our meeting, we will discuss your administration's efforts to meet commitments we are duty-bound to fulfill:

- Ensuring the safe evacuation of our citizens, allies, and partners.
- Working to end the escalating humanitarian crisis across Afghanistan.
- Securing Kabul airport and routes to it, allowing for the safe and efficient passage of all U.S. citizens, allies, and partners for evacuation.
- Granting humanitarian parole status to as many at-risk Afghans without a visa who must be evacuated as possible.
- Ensuring that all Afghans arriving in the U.S. have access to the same resettlement benefits as refugees and SIV holders.
- Adequately funding refugee resettlement agencies that are struggling to rebuild after four years of downsizing.
- If Afghan evacuees must be processed in third countries, ensuring that this is accomplished as quickly as possible in countries that honor the Refugee Convention and have records of respecting human rights.

To help ensure that your administration will accomplish these critical tasks, we commit to:

- Calling upon our membership to ensure that their Congressional representatives fully support these initiatives.
- Empowering our membership to educate Americans on the importance of maintaining our commitments to allies, and that America's diversity is our greatest strength.
- Confronting those who politicize the issue of refugee resettlement and condemn those who slander our Afghan allies to undermine support for their resettlement.

Due to the time-sensitive nature of this situation, and COVID-related risks associated with gatherings and travel, we kindly suggest that this meeting occur virtually.

We appreciate your lifelong service to our community, and your family's military service and sacrifices. We look forward to working with your Administration and stand ready to assist in your work to protect America's heroes — all of them.

Sincerely,
AMVETS
Association of Wartime Allies
Atlas.vet
Battle Tested Veterans
Black Veterans Empowerment Council
Black Veterans Project
Common Defense
Elizabeth Dole Foundation
Evocati
Greater Boston Veterans Collaborative
Headstrong Project
High Ground Veterans Advocacy
Human Rights First
Military Connected Capital
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Military Veterans in Journalism
Minority Veterans of America
Modern Military Association of America
NayceQuest
No One Left Behind
NYC Veterans Alliance
Objective Zero Foundation
Project Sanctuary

PROMOTE Leadership
PsychArmor
Sikh American Veterans Alliance
Soldiers' Angels
Spartan Capital Intelligence, LLC
Taking the Hill
The Lamia Afghan Foundation
The Lincoln Project
Union Veterans Council
United Soldiers and Sailors of America
Veteran Esquire Legal Solutions, PLLC
Veteran Warriors
Veterans for American Ideals
Veterans for Common Sense
Veterans for Responsible Leadership
Veterans for Smart Power
Veterans in Global Leadership
Veterans' Voice of America
Vietnam Veterans of America
VoteVets
With Honor Action
Women Veteran Social Justice Network

cc: The Honorable Dr. Jill Biden, Antony J. Blinken, Denis McDonough, Lloyd Austin, Rory Brosius, Jake Sullivan, Carlyn Reichel, Terri Tanielian, and Saki Ververis.