

August 25, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell:

As former Commanders of U.S. Central Command, we are writing to urge you to work closely with the Administration to protect the Afghan allies who worked with and supported the American mission on the ground. In addition to those who served alongside the U.S. military and qualify for Special Immigrant Visa status, there are thousands who worked on our civilian programs through U.S.-funded NGOs, contractors, and other implementers.

We are concerned that this group of Afghans – individuals who qualify for Priority 2 refugee status – could be left behind. These civilian operations – driven by Afghans working on U.S. funded projects – have been vital for America’s national security and for empowering millions of women and girls. These individuals who stood directly with America face grave danger now, and we must stand with them and also prioritize them for U.S.-led evacuations.

Thank you for your support in these critical times.

Very respectfully,

General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC (Ret.)
Commander
U.S. Central Command, 1997-2000

Admiral William J. Fallon, USN (Ret.)
Commander
U.S. Central Command, 2007-2008

General David Petraeus, USA (Ret.)
Commander
U.S. Central Command, 2008-2010