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October 15, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington D.C. 20016

The Honorable Ur M. Jaddou
Director
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
5900 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, Maryland 20588

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Director Jaddou,

Thank you for your work to resettle our Afghan allies. I write today to urge waiving application filing fees for Afghan nationals seeking humanitarian parole in the United States.

This very moment, many of our Afghan allies who risked their lives over the last two decades to support the United States' mission in Afghanistan are in danger from the Taliban. This is the precise circumstance that humanitarian parole was created for—to provide temporary admission into the United States for those at risk during an emergency. Over the last two months, my office has heard from hundreds of families and individuals in Afghanistan seeking help with navigating the evacuation process. Unfortunately, the \$575 filing fee per applicant to this program is undercutting resettlement efforts and proving cost-prohibitive to the people we are trying to help.

I understand that the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) created a waiver process through the I-912 form to have applicant requests considered without having to pay any fees. However, I'm concerned that the additional paperwork and adjudication time will slow down the parole process greatly, which is simply unacceptable. Time is of the essence as the Taliban tracks down Afghans with connections to the United States. Afghans fleeing a warzone should not be required to prove their financial need to have their parole request considered, and this will only serve to exacerbate the pre-existing backlog for humanitarian requests.

I recognize the challenging circumstances that USCIS is facing to review these parole applications, but we must work together to expedite this process. A blanket waiver of fees would streamline the humanitarian parole applicant process, and most importantly, greatly advance the process of admitting Afghan refugees seeking safety to the United States.

Thank you, Secretary Mayorkas and Director Jaddou. I look forward to your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Josh Harder
Member of Congress