September 16, 2022

Dear Members of Congress,

As 111 religious leaders and 59 national, state, and local faith-based organizations across traditions, we urge you to support and pass the Afghan Adjustment Act (S.4787 / H.R.8685) as part of the upcoming FY 2023 Continuing Resolution. This important bipartisan legislation provides a roadmap to permanent status for evacuated Afghans resettled in the United States to ensure they have a chance to apply to become lawful permanent residents, and makes clear that the administration continues to prioritize the relocation to safety the vulnerable Afghan allies left behind.

We are called by our sacred texts and faith principles to love our neighbor, accompany the vulnerable, and welcome the sojourner. Our congregations, synagogues, and mosques have historically played key roles in assisting refugees with housing, language, employment, and social support necessary for rapid and effective resettlement into U.S. communities. Yet, our commitment to offering refuge from violence and persecution requires our elected leaders to demonstrate moral leadership.

Across faith traditions and practices, the message is clear. The Qur'an directs us to “do good to… those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer that you meet” (4:36). In the Jewish and Christian traditions, we are also invited to welcome our neighbor, and do right by them: “When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 19:33-34); and live up to our promises: “It is better not to promise anything than to promise something and not do it” (Ecclesiastes 5:5-15). Now, we call upon Congress to stay true to our government’s promises to at-risk Afghans, who have put their faith in us. Not only would the Afghan Adjustment Act realize these values, but it would also strengthen ongoing resettlement and long-term integration efforts.

More than 75,000 at-risk Afghans were welcomed into the United States via “humanitarian parole,” a temporary immigration status typically only granted for 1 or 2 years to provide safety for people under threat. Given the temporary nature of parole, tens of thousands of the relocated Afghan men, women, and children resettled in the U.S. have been navigating complex legal issues to find lasting protections in the U.S. Without the Afghan Adjustment Act, Afghans that the U.S. government relocated face uncertainty and insecurity, including the threat of family separation. As evidenced by the broad support for this bipartisan, bicameral legislation, it is clear Congress agrees that every Afghan family deserves a peaceful and dignified immigration process and a pathway to permanent protection.

The faith community has repeatedly urged Congress to provide lasting protection for our new Afghan neighbors. The only viable solution is through the passage of an Afghan Adjustment Act, as the U.S. has done for other vulnerable people such as Cubans following the rise of Fidel Castro, Southeast Asians following the fall of Saigon, and Iraqis following multiple U.S. military engagements, while we continue to hold the administration accountable for ongoing relocations and processing of vulnerable Afghans to the United States. As faith leaders, we join security experts, refugee resettlement agencies, Afghan Americans, women’s rights leaders, veterans groups, and legal experts in seeking passage of this legislation.

We believe Congress has a moral responsibility to act swiftly. We eagerly look forward to working with you to ensure your support for the Afghan Adjustment Act as part of the upcoming FY23 Continuing Resolution.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,
Faith Organizations/Groups

Bethany Christian Services  
Cedar Hills United Church of Christ  
Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ  
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America  
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice  
Church Council of Greater Seattle  
Church World Service  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Disciples Refugee and Immigration Ministries  
Dorothy Day Catholic Worker House, DC  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Faith Lutheran Church (ELCA)  
First Church in Windsor, CT  
First Lutheran  
First Presbyterian Church  
HIAS  
Hindus for Human Rights  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC  
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity  
Islamic Relief USA  
Jemez Peacemakers  
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA  
Journey's End Refugee Services, Inc.  
Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSCA)  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Member of the Berkeley Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)  
Meriden Congregational Church, UCC  
Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
Miracles And Blessings UMC  
MPower Change Action Fund  
Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Council of Jewish Women  
North Madison Congregational Church  
Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity, Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth  
Our Lady of Lourdes  
Pax Christi New York State  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Provincial Council Clerics of St. Viator  
Shoreline Interfaith Resettlement  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership  
Sisters of Charity of New York  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team  
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (EW)  
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York  
Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi  
Southwestern Texas Synod, ELCA  
St. Edward's Episcopal Church  
Susan Armstrong  
The Episcopal Church  
Transformations CDC  
Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio  
Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
United Church of Christ
Unity Lutheran Church
Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration
World Relief

Faith Leaders

National
Sister Rose Therese Nolta
Eileen Gannon, OP
Rev. Marilyn Chilcote
Rev. Joshua Baird

Alabama
Elder and Global Mission Team Member Lee Cooper

Alaska
Rev. Ellen Johnson-Price, Immanuel Presbyterian Church

Arizona
Sister Margaret McBride, Sisters of Mercy

Arkansas
Rev. Dr. Clint Schnekloth, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Arizona
Sister Margaret McBride, Sisters of Mercy

California
Rev. John Katonah, Yolo Interfaith Immigration Network
Chaplain Michael Eselun, Simms/Mann UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology
Ms. JL Angell, Presbyterian
Dr. & Imam Mohammed Hashemi, Islamic Center of Los Angeles and Orange County
Rev. Diane Mettam Diane Mettam, United Methodist Church
Elder Merilie Robertson, Knox Presbyterian Church
Rabbi Peretz Wolf-Prusan, JFCS East Bay
Reverend Carla Dietz, First Congregational Church of San Jose
Board Member Felicity Figueroa, Newport Mesa Irvine Interfaith Council
Rev. Mary Kay Will, United Methodist Church

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Rev. Shannon Clarkson, First Church Guilford
The Rev. Mark Lingle, St. Francis Episcopal Church
The Rev. Mary Anne Osborn, Christ Episcopal Church, Guilford, CT
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Rev. Tony Lorenzen, Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden
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Rev. Nicole Grant Yonkman, First Church in Windsor, CT
Rev. Jocelyn Cadwallader, First Presbyterian Church, New Haven

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Rev. Fred L Hammond, Manatee Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Georgia
Dr. Belle McMaster, Monticello Presbyterian Church
Rev. Tom Hagood, Columbia Presbyterian Church

Illinois
Rev. Anna Ernst, Epiphany Evangelical Lutheran Church/Metro Chicago Synod, ELCA
Marilyn Breiding, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Arlington Heights, IL
Rev. Stuart Barnes Jamieson, Carter-Westminster United Presbyterian Church
Mr. Brian Chapman, Cook County
Br. Michael Gosch, Clerics of St. Viator (Viatorians)
Sister Catherine Leamy, Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
Rev. Nancy Goede, Augustana Lutheran Church of Hyde Park

Iowa
Sr. Teri Hadro, Sisters of Charity, BVM

Kansas
Rev. Kenneth K. Grenz, United Methodist Church

Kentucky
Rev. Jane Larsen-Wigger, Presbyterian Church (USA)

Maine
Rev. Steve Garnaas-Holmes, New England Conference, United Methodist Church

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Sister Patricia Kirk, Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore
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Rev. Abhi Janamanachi, Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

Massachusetts
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Monica Stuhlreyer, IHM Motherhouse

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Paula Nordhem, United Church of Christ
Sr. Dorothy Zeller, Good Counsel Learning Center
Rev. Dr. Lindsay Louise Biddle, Presbyterian Church (USA)
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Rev. Marc A. Stutzel, Christ Lutheran Church
New York
Rev. Dr. Richard Gilbert
Dr. Rosemarie Pace, Pax Christi New York State
Sister Margaret O'Brien, Sisters of Charity
Brother Michael Potvin-Frost, Order of Franciscan Hermits
Rev. Merle Showers, University United Methodist Church
Sister Joan Agro, Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York
Sister Anne Marie Bucher

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Rev. Leigh Wisner, Clemmons Presbyterian Church
Rev. Diane Faires Beadle, St. Paul's Christian Church
Rev. Dr. Steven Tate, Congregational United Church of Christ
The Rev. Christine Payne-Travers, Retired Episcopal priest
Ms. Trisha Lester, Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
The Rev. Dr. Gary Smith, Saint Andrews-Covenant Presbyterian Church

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Sister Carol Dikovitsky, Sisters of Notre Dame
Elder Paula Ewers, College Hill Community Church
Rev. Kellie Kelly, Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
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Rev. Jennifer Seach, Beavercreek United Church of Christ

Pennsylvania
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Rev. Paul Hagedorn, Tabernacle Lutheran Church
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Mr. George J. Schofield III, St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Spiritual Director Linda Frank, St. John Neumann
Father Christopher Promis, Spiritans
Sister Dominica Lo Bianco, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia

Texas
Francis Hymel, New Hope Counseling
Rev. Allison Lanza, Be The Neighbor
Sr. Betty Keegan, Franciscan Missionary of Mary
Bishop Susan Briner, Southwestern Texas Synod, ELCA
Rev. Dr. Paul Ziese, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Vermont
Venerable Catherine Cooke, Cathedral Church of St. Paul- Episcopal
Rev. Joan Javier-Duval, Unitarian Church of Montpelier

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Sardarni Adarsh Khalsa, Raj Khalsa Gurdwara

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Rev. Joshua Stromberg-Wojcik, El Camino de Emaús Lutheran Church

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Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea, Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries

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Rev. Michael Ludle, Ravenswood United Methodist Charge
Rev. Amber Baker, Cheat Lake UMC
Rev. Sarah Allen, United Methodist Church
Rev. Joe Webb, New Wineskins

**Wisconsin**
Rev. Valerie Showalter Madison Mennonite Church
Pastor Rev. Don T. Timmerman, Mary of Magdala
Rev. James Rossey, Norbertine Fathers
Sister Ruth Battaglia, Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Sr. Frances Hoffman, Racine Dominicans
Dr. Stephanie Mitchell, Racine Interfaith Coalition
Rev. Jamie Brandt Brieske, Immanuel Lutheran Church
Rev. Jeffrey Dodson, First Congregational Church of Ripon UCC