

Padilla, colleagues call on Biden to continue safe relocation of Afghan refugees

September 15, 2021



Following the U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, U.S. Senator Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) led 25 of his Senate colleagues in calling on President Biden to continue the safe relocation of Afghan refugees, parolees, evacuees and Special Immigrant Visa applicants currently residing in third countries to the United States.

The letter urges the administration to take immediate steps to expedite SIV and refugee program processing so that more Afghans are not left behind and ensuring all avenues are open for them to come to the United States, including by designating a humanitarian parole category for them.

“The United States has long recognized the need to provide protections for refugees and those seeking humanitarian parole... It is our duty as Americans to ensuring that Afghan partners who risked so much for our nation have a safe place to relocate, and we urge you to take immediate steps to expedite the SIV and refugee program processing so that more Afghans are not left behind,” **wrote the Senators.**

“In addition, we urge you to ensure that all evacuated Afghans, including those evacuated by private sector volunteers, are paroled into the United States and not left to languish in third countries in legal limbo,” **they continued.** “Specifically, we ask that you create a designated humanitarian parole category for certain Afghan women and children, activists, human rights defenders, parliamentarians, journalists, and others who are in danger.”

The letter, led by Senator Padilla, was signed by U.S. Senators Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Thomas Carper (D-Del.), Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Cory Booker (D-N.J.), Chris Coons (D-Del.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Bernie Sanders (D-Vt.), Ben Cardin (D-Md.), Bob Casey (D-Pa.), Michael Bennett (D-Colo.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), Tim Kaine (D-Va.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Ed Markey (D-Mass), Tina Smith (D-Minn), Raphael Warnock (D-Ga.), Martin Heinrich (D-N.M), and Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.).