

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To require a strategy to support nationals of Afghanistan who are applicants for special immigrant visas or for referral to the United States Refugee Admissions Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

and Ms. Ernst and Mr. Cardin

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To require a strategy to support nationals of Afghanistan who are applicants for special immigrant visas or for referral to the United States Refugee Admissions Program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Honor Our Commit-
5 ment Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that the United States
8 should increase support for nationals of Afghanistan who

1 aided the United States mission in Afghanistan during the
2 past 20 years and are now under threat from the Taliban,
3 specifically such nationals of Afghanistan, in Afghanistan
4 or third countries, who are applicants for—

5 (1) special immigrant visas under the Afghan
6 Allies Protection Act of 2009 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note;
7 Public Law 111–8) or section 1059 of the National
8 Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (8
9 U.S.C. 1101 note; Public Law 109–163); or

10 (2) referral to the United States Refugee Ad-
11 missions Program as refugees (as defined in section
12 101(a)(42) of the Immigration and Nationality Act
13 (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42))), including as Priority 2 ref-
14 ugees.

15 **SEC. 3. STRATEGY TO SUPPORT CERTAIN NATIONALS OF**
16 **AFGHANISTAN.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the
18 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State,
19 in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security,
20 the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and
21 the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agen-
22 cies, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Con-
23 gress a strategy for the safe processing abroad of nationals
24 of Afghanistan described in section 2.

- 1 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required by subsection
2 (a) shall include a detailed plan—
- 3 (1) to prioritize for evacuation from Afghani-
4 stan nationals of Afghanistan described in section 2;
- 5 (2) to provide for security checks for such na-
6 tionals of Afghanistan, which—
- 7 (A) shall be conducted remotely before
8 their departure from Afghanistan; and
- 9 (B) shall not take the place of post-depar-
10 ture security screening;
- 11 (3) to facilitate, after such security checks, the
12 rapid departure from Afghanistan by air charter and
13 land passage of such nationals of Afghanistan who
14 satisfy the requirements of such security checks;
- 15 (4) to provide letters of support, diplomatic
16 notes, and other documentation, as appropriate, to
17 ease transit for such nationals of Afghanistan;
- 18 (5) to engage governments of relevant countries
19 to better facilitate evacuation of such nationals of
20 Afghanistan;
- 21 (6) to disseminate frequent updates to such na-
22 tionals of Afghanistan and relevant nongovernmental
23 organizations with respect to evacuation from Af-
24 ghanistan;

1 (7) to identify and establish sufficient locations
2 outside Afghanistan and the United States that will
3 accept such nationals of Afghanistan during case
4 processing (including during the processes of secu-
5 rity checks and establishing the eligibility of such
6 nationals of Afghanistan before their travel to the
7 United States, which shall include any in-person
8 interview required for full adjudication of a case
9 and, in the case of a special immigrant visa,
10 issuance of such visa) for—

11 (A) the special immigrant visas described
12 in paragraph (1) of section 2; or

13 (B) referral to, and acceptance for resettle-
14 ment in the United States by, the United States
15 Refugee Admissions Program described in para-
16 graph (2) of that section;

17 (8) to identify necessary resource, personnel,
18 and equipment requirements to increase capacity to
19 better support such nationals of Afghanistan and re-
20 duce their application processing times, while ensur-
21 ing strict and necessary security checks, including,
22 to the extent practicable, by allowing such nationals
23 of Afghanistan to receive referrals to the United
24 States Refugee Admissions Program while they are

1 still in Afghanistan so as to initiate application proc-
2 essing more expeditiously; and

3 (9) to provide for relocation outside Afghani-
4 stan to third countries for nationals of Afghanistan
5 described in section 2 who are unable to successfully
6 complete security checks and application processing
7 to establish eligibility to travel to the United States.

8 (c) FORM.—The strategy required by subsection (a)
9 shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include
10 a classified annex.

11 **SEC. 4. MONTHLY REPORT.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the
13 date of the enactment of this Act, and monthly thereafter
14 until December 31, 2022, the Secretary of State, in co-
15 ordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and
16 the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agen-
17 cies, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Con-
18 gress a report on efforts to support nationals of Afghani-
19 stan described in section 2.

20 (b) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by subsection
21 (a) shall include the following:

22 (1) The number of nationals of Afghanistan re-
23 ferred to the United States Refugee Admissions Pro-
24 gram as Priority 1 and Priority 2 refugees since Au-
25 gust 29, 2021.

1 (2) An assessment of whether each such ref-
2 ugee—

3 (A) remains in Afghanistan; or

4 (B) is outside Afghanistan.

5 (3) With respect to nationals of Afghanistan
6 who have applied for referral to the United States
7 Refugee Program, the number applications that—

8 (A) have been approved;

9 (B) have been denied; and

10 (C) are pending adjudication.

11 (4) The number of nationals of Afghanistan
12 who have pending applications for special immigrant
13 visas described in section 2(1), disaggregated by the
14 special immigrant visa processing steps completed
15 with respect to such individuals.

16 (5) A description of the measures taken to im-
17 plement the strategy under section 3.

18 **SEC. 5. DEFINITION OF APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF**
19 **CONGRESS.**

20 In this Act, the term “appropriate committees of
21 Congress” means—

22 (1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the
23 Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on
24 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; and
25 the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

1 (2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the
2 Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on
3 Homeland Security, and the Committee on Armed
4 Services of the House of Representatives.