



Afghan Adjustment Act Toolkit

For State Leaders

Voice for Refugee Action Fund 501(c)(4) is a first-of-its kind organization created to advance pro-refugee policies at the national, state, and local level, to hold elected leaders accountable and to support the election of pro-refugee candidates at all levels of government.

We have joined our partners at the Evacuate Our Allies Coalition and Welcome US to support advocacy efforts over the past few months. However, we are now at an important moment where the Afghan Adjustment Act could be passed and we know that we are in a unique organizational position to reach out to you, an elected official.

Since August of 2021, [over 130,000 Afghans](#) were evacuated from Afghanistan, and the United States has welcomed more than [76,000 Afghan evacuees](#) who fled violence and persecution. Even more are hiding in Afghanistan or waiting in a host country. While many of the evacuees have been women's rights advocates, journalists, U.S. military interpreters, embassy workers, and other advisors who assisted the U.S. mission, [44% of Afghans](#) who have arrived since August are children. Despite eligibility for Special Immigrant Visas or refugee status, due to delays before the evacuation and the nature of such a hasty withdrawal, most Afghan arrivals have entered the U.S. with **humanitarian parole**.

The Department of Homeland Security has the authority to grant humanitarian parole for 1-2 years to provide safety for people under threat. However, unlike other immigrant visa or refugee programs, humanitarian parole is temporary and is not a pathway to another, long term, status. This leaves thousands of Afghans who have fled and arrived in the United States in a legal limbo without the chance of long term safety.

There is a solution to rectify this challenge now faced by thousands of Afghan arrivals: the [Afghan Adjustment Act](#). An adjustment act would offer Afghan refugees arriving with humanitarian parole the chance to apply for lawful permanent resident status, the same status they would have received if they would have had the time to arrive as refugees.

As an elected official you have an outsized influence on your congressional colleagues who have the power to support and pass the Afghan Adjustment Act (AAA). We know you are passionate about this issue, but busy and perhaps even unsure how to contribute to the discussion.

We have compiled here 3 resources with example language and graphics you can use to urge action on this important issue. These include:

1. Downloadable [social media graphics and captions](#) & a petition link you can share with your constituents
2. Text you can use to [send a letter to your federal colleagues](#)
3. Text you can use to [submit a letter to your local editor or publish a local op-ed](#) -OR- the option to submit it automatically to news outlets in your community through our action center.

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have an outsized influence
on your congressional
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the Afghan Adjustment Act.**

1) Share the petition on social media

One of the simplest ways you can help is by sharing this petition online with your audience and constituents. When congressional leaders see that constituents from their same districts are rallying and mobilizing to support an issue, they take notice and are more likely to respond with the bold strokes we need to meet this humanitarian crisis. We need as many signatures as we can get to tell congress to introduce the Afghan Adjustment Act. **Please share these posts on all your channels, more than once between February 3- February 18th.**

Petition Link: actionnetwork.org/petitions/tell-congress-to-pass-the-afghan-adjustment-act

Shortened URL: bit.ly/passtheAAA

Facebook & Instagram Graphics and Captions:

[Download graphics here](#)

- 🚩 Urgent action request!
Since August of 2021, the U.S. has welcomed thousands of Afghans, many of them children. These families of Afghan allies and those who were at risk of harm need our help to ask congress to act.
Friends at @Voice for Refuge are gathering signatures on a petition to urge congress to support the Afghan Adjustment Act to provide much needed, long term safety to our new Afghan neighbors.
Take action and sign this petition to support Afghan refugees!
👉👉👉 bit.ly/passtheAAA

- 44% of Afghan arrivals since August 2021 have been children. Congress needs to act now to ensure that these children and their families are able to find long term safety.
When families fled during the evacuation, most arrived with humanitarian parole. Unlike the refugee status they would have received if danger had not been imminent, humanitarian parole is temporary, leaving Afghan families without options in 1-2 years.
Congress can act to correct this harm by passing the Afghan Adjustment Act NOW.
Sign the petition to tell Congress to #WelcomeAfghanRefugees
👉👉👉 bit.ly/passtheAAA

Dear Congress,

I urge you to take action to support #AfghanRefugees and to PASS the Afghan Adjustment Act

Sincerely,

x _____

Add your name to the petition

bit.ly/passtheAAA

Twitter Graphics and Tweets:

[Download graphics here](#)

- 44% of Afghan arrivals since August 2021 have been children. Congress needs to act now to ensure that these children and their families are able to find long term safety.
Sign the petition to tell Congress to #WelcomeAfghanRefugees
👉👉👉 bit.ly/passtheAAA
- Congress has the power to welcome #AfghanRefugees and we are urging them to use that power to pass the #AfghanAdjustmentAct!
Sign this petition to join the call to welcome Afghan refugees 👉 bit.ly/passtheAAA
- SIGN THIS PETITION
The U.S. has welcomed thousands of Afghans, many of them children. We need @SpeakerPelosi and @SenSchumer to support the Afghan Adjustment Act to provide long-term safety to our new neighbors.
Take action to support Afghan refugees! 👉 bit.ly/passtheAAA

Tell Congress
**PASS THE AFGHAN
ADJUSTMENT ACT**

Sign the petition
bit.ly/passtheAAA

2) Send a Letter to your Congressional Representatives

As a state elected official, you have an outsized influence on your federal representatives. We're asking that you leverage your position to urge for immediate action to welcome Afghans by sending a letter to Congress.

We have included a pre-written, template message for you. Please be sure to edit all text in brackets to include personalized information about your office and district.

***Pro-Tip:** After you send a letter to congress, share a picture of the text on social media and tag the representatives you sent the letter to. It's quick and easy to share a photo and say *"Today I sent a letter to my federal colleagues urging them to take action on the Afghan Adjustment Act. Read what I sent below."* Simple acts of calling for action from representatives on social media can encourage action, as you are well aware.

Dear Representative/Senator [Name],

As your constituent and fellow elected representative from [City, State], I am writing to you on an urgent matter of great importance to myself and our shared community. I currently serve as [elected office] for [district/city ward/county/etc.] and have seen the critical need for our state and country to respond to the Afghan evacuation crisis with urgency and care.

Since August of 2021, the United States has welcomed more than [76,000 Afghan evacuees](#) who fled violence and persecution. Even more are hiding in Afghanistan or fled to a host country. While many of the evacuees have been women's rights advocates, journalists, U.S. military interpreters, embassy workers, and other advisors who assisted the U.S. mission, 44% of Afghans who have arrived since August are children. Despite eligibility for Special Immigrant Visas or refugee status, due to delays before the evacuation and the nature of such a hasty withdrawal, most Afghan arrivals have entered the U.S. with **humanitarian parole**.

The Department of Homeland Security has the authority to grant humanitarian parole for 1-2 years to provide safety for people under threat. However, unlike other immigrant visa or refugee programs, humanitarian parole is temporary and is not a pathway to another, long term, status. This leaves thousands of Afghans who have fled and arrived in the United States in a legal limbo without the chance of long term safety.

I am urging you to protect our Afghan allies, their families, and other at-risk Afghans who have made it to our communities by supporting the passage of the **Afghan Adjustment Act**. An adjustment act would offer Afghan evacuees arriving with humanitarian parole the chance to apply to become lawful permanent residents one year after arrival, the same status they would have received if they would have had the time to arrive as refugees.

It is equally important that as we face the worst refugee crisis in history, Congress robustly invests in the U.S. refugee resettlement program so it can be rebuilt stronger and better than before. We need bold leadership in securing the necessary investments in the overseas and domestic infrastructure and improvements to the program to strengthen our ability to help all refugees integrate and thrive in their new communities. I urge you to support robust supplemental funding for refugee-related accounts, including:

- The Refugee and Entrant Assistance account to fund the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) which helps states and local communities welcome and support refugees on their path to self-sufficiency, and other integration services for Afghans.
- The Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) account to address not only our Afghanistan response but also other emerging crises. ERMA investments provide life-sustaining assistance to refugees, including food, shelter, health care, and education.
- The Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) and International Disaster Assistance (IDA) accounts, which would support the domestic reception and placement (R&P) program, administered by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) within the Department

of State, as well as overseas humanitarian assistance to respond to the unprecedented displacement crisis.

- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) within the Department of Homeland Security to address the refugee and asylum backlogs – and to help process parole renewals and adjustment applications.

Our shared community of [City, State] is not only home to other refugees and volunteers currently welcoming new Afghan arrivals, our community is also home to veterans who served overseas in Afghanistan and made friendships with Afghans while there. The refugee community and veteran community are asking us to take action to do more to welcome Afghans and ensure their long term safety in the U.S.. Failure to do so will cause irreparable harm to the Afghan families already living in our state as well as cause serious moral injury to our service members, many of whom have been on the front lines of advocating for evacuating our Afghan allies to safety.

Now is the time to rebuild the U.S. resettlement program and welcome our new neighbors. I thank you for the work you're doing to represent our state and ask that you take action to ensure that our desire to welcome Afghans is heard in congress.

Sincerely,

[Your name & title]

[District, City, State]

3) Publish a local op-ed or letter to your editor.

Attached here is a template you can use to tell the story of why it is important to you that congress pass legislation to increase support for new Afghan arrivals. You can submit this piece to your own media contacts or follow this link to automatically submit it as a letter to the editor in your local area.

[Submit a Letter to Your Editor through our one-click action center](#)

Key Points:

- Refugee resettlement is good for our community
- Afghans assisted the US mission and are looking for long term stability
- Congress has the power to provide long term protections and I call on my colleagues at the federal level to use that power

Guidance:

- Keep your letter to 3-4 paragraphs
- Put important information towards the top as it will be the first to be read
- Discuss why this is important to you personally and how it is important to your community and those you care about
- Be sure to center it on asking for congress to act on the Afghan Adjustment Act

*****Again, be sure to edit texts in brackets before you submit your letter.*****

*If you submit a letter & it is published, please send a url link of the published letter to kkline@voiceforrefuge.org so that we can amplify it on our platforms.

As [elected position] for [district, ward, city, county] I felt the need to share with the larger community about the important decision our congressional representatives face in regards to how our country responds to welcoming the thousands of Afghans who have been evacuated to our communities since August 2021. Specifically, I am calling on congress to support the passage of the Afghan Adjustment Act.

Afghan interpreters, civil rights leaders, journalists, engineers, education professionals, and others who had assisted the U.S. mission in Afghanistan lost their sense of safety and home in a matter of days. Thousands have made it safely to the United States while many more are still in hiding or awaiting long term safety in a third country. Close to half of all our new Afghan neighbors are children.

In the midst of a chaotic withdrawal, Afghans who would have been eligible to come to the U.S. with Special Immigrant Visas or with refugee status have instead been granted humanitarian parole. The Department of Homeland Security vets and grants humanitarian parole for 1-2 years to provide immediate safety for people under threat. However, unlike other immigrant visa or refugee programs, humanitarian parole is temporary and is not a pathway to another, long term, status. The Afghan Adjustment Act would offer Afghan refugees arriving with humanitarian parole the chance to apply for lawful permanent resident status, the same status they would have received if they would have had the time to arrive as refugees.

I know many of you served or had loved ones who served overseas and worked alongside families and individuals in Afghanistan who welcomed us into their homes as they assisted our mission. These people are here now, and so far, their sense of welcome into our community has been stopped by the unstable nature of their status, something that Congress could resolve. This is why I am calling on Representative [Congressional Representative Name], Senator [Senator Name], and Senator [Senator Name] to urge them to take immediate action to allow our state and our community to give Afghans the welcome they need.

As a [representative, leader, person of faith, person who cares for refugees, etc.] I had to speak up to ensure that our representatives know that we are watching and waiting for them to welcome Afghan families.

And to my Afghan neighbors and new Afghan families, I want to say welcome to our community and that we as your new neighbors are going to do what it takes to ensure that [State] is a place where you can build community, find safety, and feel at home.

**Thank you for your participation in leveraging your role
to advocate for our new Afghan neighbors.**

To learn more about Voice for Refuge Action Fund visit www.VoiceForRefuge.org

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