

Support our Afghan Fulbrighters & Other Exchange Visitors

February 25, 2022

Both [executive](#) and congressional actions are needed in order to provide safe, legal pathways for our Afghan allies who wish to pursue higher education opportunities in the United States. In particular, relief is needed for Afghan Fulbright scholars and other exchange visitors, both current and alumni of the program.

Include Provisions for Afghan Fulbrighters, Exchange Visitors, and other Afghans who entered the United States on temporary, non-immigrant visas

Rep. John Garamendi (Calif-3rd district) introduced [H.R.5482](#) to provide Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs) for Afghan Fulbrighters and other exchange visitors. We urge support for this bill, which has been included as an amendment in the House-passed COMPETES Act. The Presidents' Alliance urges House and Senate conferees to include this bill, as amended, in the final bill and to direct the Department of Homeland Security and State to waive the 2-year home residency requirement for Afghan nationals who have held J visas. These individuals need action so that they can move expeditiously toward SIV status and onto legal permanent residency.

About the Afghan Adjustment Act (AAA)

The tens of thousands of Afghans who have arrived in the U.S. need a pathway to real and lasting safety.

Most Afghans brought to the United States through Operation Allies Refuge entered the country on humanitarian parole, which only temporarily allows people fleeing danger to remain in the U.S. These Afghans will need to find another pathway to safety before their parole expires. Currently, one pathway available to newly arrived Afghans is asylum, a paperwork-intensive process with years-long backlogs that have prevented thousands of people from finding safety in the U.S. In order to make successful asylum claims, these Afghans will be asked to provide proof that a person would face violence in their home country – in relation to their work with Americans, with women's rights groups, with reporting on corruption, and more. These documents are the same ones that Afghans were advised to destroy in order to escape or elude the Taliban during the evacuation.

Afghans should not be penalized for how the U.S. evacuated them and the means by which their family was able to reach safety.

To ensure that Afghans find real, lasting safety in the U.S., Congress must pass the Afghan Adjustment Act, which would allow Afghan humanitarian parolees to seek legal permanent residence in the U.S. The Presidents' Alliance urges the Senate to pass the AAA at the next available opportunity, and to include legislative language from HR5482, as amended.

[Learn more about advocacy with the Biden Administration](#) to ensure waivers from the 2-year home residency requirement for Afghan Fulbrighters and other Exchange Visitors and for a Designated Parole Program for Afghanistan.