



Betraying Our Values: Congress' Omission of Bipartisan Afghan Adjustment Act in Spending Bill Harms Our Communities

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Media Contact:

Michele Garnett McKenzie, Deputy Director of The Advocates for Human Rights
mmckenzie@advrights.org; 612.746.4685

(Minneapolis, MN. December 20, 2022) – The Advocates for Human Rights is outraged to see that Congress failed to include the bipartisan Afghan Adjustment Act in its current omnibus spending package. The text of the Act is the result of a year-long negotiation of bipartisan and bicameral leaders, in consultation with immigration and national security experts, responding to requests from diverse [coalitions](#) of veterans, Afghans, military members, [national security experts](#), faith groups, legal service providers, cities, states and more who know that we must provide a pathway to permanence for our Afghan allies.

After more than 70,000 Afghans were evacuated to safety following the fall of Kabul to the Taliban, communities, veterans, service providers and local governments seized the moment to welcome Afghan neighbors. Despite that welcome, the US government provided Afghans only temporary immigration status, humanitarian parole, set to expire in 2023. Congress has had the power—and the duty—to address gaps in our immigration laws and provide the same type of permanent status given to allies following every other major US military action. The AAA would do just that.

“Without the AAA, our Afghan neighbors will continue to live in uncertainty and fear of what will happen when parole expires next fall. While organizations like The Advocates will continue to provide legal services for alternative forms of relief, Congress has failed to do its part. By failing to act, Congress is forcing our Afghan allies to face traumatizing and resource-intensive asylum processes, ongoing stress of uncertainty, and separation from family.” Said Zack Alburn, Staff Attorney with The Advocates’ Afghan Legal Project.

The Act received bipartisan support from Minnesota’s Senator Klobuchar, along with ranking Republicans on Judiciary, Appropriations and Veteran’s Affairs. In the House, more than 100 supporters have signed-on across both aisles. Congress has had multiple opportunities to pass the AAA—having failed to respond to two requests from the White House and include the bill in two continuing resolutions or the National Defense Reauthorization Act.

The current spending package is the last opportunity for *this* congress to uphold our commitment to our allies and neighbors. While advocates, veterans, Afghans and communities will not stop advocating for future Congressional action, further delay also means that service providers and Afghans will be facing impossibly short timelines to prepare and file applications before parole expires next year.

“Failure to include the bipartisan, bicameral AAA in this must-pass legislation reflects a failure of Congress to stop playing politics with human rights and community needs. Advocates across a broad spectrum of political views came together in support of this Act, which ensures Afghans can find safety and permanence through safe, orderly and fair processes with dignity and without re-traumatization. Congress must do the same.” Said Michele Garnett McKenzie, Deputy Director of The Advocates for Human Rights.

The Advocates calls on Senate members to attach the bill as a floor amendment immediately and send an unmistakable message that the U.S. can put partisan politics aside and do the right thing for those who share our human rights and democratic values.

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