

August 27, 2021

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI) and co-signing associations write to you today to voice solidarity with the Afghan community and express our deep concern about the humanitarian crisis that is currently unfolding.

CCHI is deeply concerned to see vulnerable Afghans including human rights defenders, women's rights activists, LGBTQ advocates, interpreters, media workers, and other individuals who have worked with military, government, and non-governmental organizations of the U.S. and allies now at risk of retaliation with few avenues to flee. It has become evident that the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, particularly in the capital city of Kabul, has made it extremely challenging for any American-affiliated or vulnerable Afghan to seek safety abroad.

The August 31st deadline makes it nearly impossible to evacuate all those in need.

CCHI, in coalition with many other organizations that work with refugees and immigrants, strongly urges the Administration to extend the deadline until all at-risk Afghans can be evacuated from Afghanistan as well as:

- First, immediately process Special Immigrant Visas (SIV) to allow safe passage for the affected Afghan population.
- Second, expeditiously process humanitarian immigrant visas, including asylum and refugee applications particularly for more vulnerable groups – women and children.
- Third, immediately allocate additional resources and funding for local community-based organizations and refugee resettlement agencies so that they can properly support the Afghan community already in the U.S and new arrivals, making sure their needs are met - including professional interpretation - throughout their resettlement experience.
- Fourth, to commit to providing opportunities for former U.S. Afghan interpreters to receive any necessary training to continue working as professional interpreters, including allocating funds to support interpreter certification.

For more than a decade, CCHI has been committed to ensuring immigrants and refugees have professional language support. U.S. leadership matters. We encourage the Administration to keep its promise of safe passage not just to Afghans who supported the U.S. military and diplomatic corps, but to all Afghans facing danger from the Taliban. The United States' commitment to Afghans is more than a simple promise – it is a moral imperative that we prevent harm from coming to those in dire need of protection.

Most respectfully,
CCHI Commissioners

Association of Language Companies (ALC)
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT)
National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC)