

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051  
MINORITY (202) 225-5074  
<https://oversight.house.gov>

September 30, 2021

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Stephen F. Lynch  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on National Security

Dear Chairwoman Maloney and Chairman Lynch:

On August 18, 2021, we wrote to you requesting a hearing with Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin. You never responded.

On September 22, 2021, you held a highly classified, closed door, Members-only briefing that did not include either Secretary Blinken or Secretary Austin. This briefing did not answer our questions, did not answer the American people's questions, and did not absolve you of your duty to conduct public oversight over the ongoing national security and humanitarian crises in Afghanistan. We therefore renew our August 18 request for a public hearing as soon as possible.

While you have refused to address Committee Republican requests for a public hearing, the crises in Afghanistan have continued to deepen. Since our initial request:

1. Radical terrorists killed 13 U.S. servicemen and women and dozens of Afghans outside of Harmed Karzai International Airport;<sup>1</sup>
2. The Biden Administration conducted a drone strike that killed ten Afghan civilians, including seven children, and kept the truth from the public for over two weeks;<sup>2</sup>
3. The Biden Administration stranded hundreds of American citizens and American green card holders in Afghanistan to meet its self-imposed withdrawal deadline;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Meghann Myers, et. al., *US troop death toll now at 13, with 18 wounded, in HKIA attack: CENTCOM*, MILITARY TIMES (Aug. 26, 2021), <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/08/26/explosion-outside-kabul-airport-casualties-unknown/>.

<sup>2</sup> Alex Horton, et. al., *Examining a 'righteous' strike*, WASH. POST (Sept. 10, 2021), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2021/kabul-drone-strike-questions/>.

<sup>3</sup> Julie Watson & Bernard Condon, *Rescue groups: US tally misses hundreds left in Afghanistan*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Sept. 4, 2021), <https://apnews.com/article/afghanistan-immigration-a56824dbd3e9953e65589d30924d9435>.

4. The Taliban-formed Afghan government includes U.S.-recognized terrorists, including some from the lethal Haqqani Network;<sup>4</sup>
5. The Taliban threw a military parade with their newly acquired U.S.-made military arsenal;<sup>5</sup>
6. The Taliban invited China, Russia, and Iran to its official event recognizing its takeover;<sup>6</sup>
7. Osama bin Laden's security chief was welcomed back into Afghanistan to applause after 20 years of exile;<sup>7</sup>
8. The Taliban have violently beaten women protesting for equal rights;<sup>8</sup>
9. The Taliban formed an all-male government;<sup>9</sup>
10. The Taliban eliminated the Women's Affairs Ministry and replaced it with the Ministry for Preaching and Guidance and the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice;<sup>10</sup>
11. The Taliban banned women and girls from attending secondary education institutions;<sup>11</sup>
12. The Biden Administration shared intelligence with the Taliban, potentially allowing them to warn their allies of upcoming U.S. evacuation or military efforts;<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Sudarsan Raghavan, *The U.S. branded the Haqqani's terrorists and issued \$5 million bounties. Now they're in power in the Taliban government.*, WASH. POST (Sept. 11, 2021), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/haqqanis-afghanistan-taliban/2021/09/10/71f82620-123b-11ec-baca-86b144fc8a2d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/haqqanis-afghanistan-taliban/2021/09/10/71f82620-123b-11ec-baca-86b144fc8a2d_story.html).

<sup>5</sup> Emily Crane, *Taliban throws victory parade with US military equipment*, N.Y. POST (Sept. 1, 2021), <https://nypost.com/2021/09/01/taliban-throws-victory-parade-with-us-military-equipment/>.

<sup>6</sup> *Taliban invite Turkey, China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan, and Qatar for govt formation event*, THE WEEK (Sept. 6, 2021), <https://www.theweek.in/news/world/2021/09/06/taliban-invite-turkey-china-russia-iran-pakistan-and-qatar-for-govt-formation-event.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Emily Crane, *Bin Laden's al Qaeda security chief back in Afghanistan, videos show*, N.Y. POST (Aug. 30, 2021), <https://nypost.com/2021/08/30/bin-ladens-al-qaeda-security-chief-back-in-afghanistan-videos/>.

<sup>8</sup> Yogita Limaye & Aakriti Thapar, *Afghanistan: Women beaten for demanding their rights*, BBC (Sept. 8, 2021), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-58491747>.

<sup>9</sup> Kathy Gannon, *Taliban form all-male Afghan government of old guard members*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Sept. 7, 2021), <https://apnews.com/article/middle-east-pakistan-afghanistan-arrests-islamabad-d50b1b490d27d32eb20cc11b77c12c87>.

<sup>10</sup> *Taliban replaces ministry for women with 'guidance' ministry*, AL JAZEERA (Sept. 18, 2021), <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/18/taliban-replace-ministry-for-women-with-guidance-ministry>.

<sup>11</sup> Emma Graham-Harrison, *Taliban ban girls from secondary education in Afghanistan*, THE GUARDIAN (Sept. 17, 2021), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/sep/17/taliban-ban-girls-from-secondary-education-in-afghanistan>.

<sup>12</sup> Kyle Morris, *CENTCOM commander says U.S. sharing intel with Taliban*, FOX NEWS (Aug. 26, 2021), <https://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/centcom-commander-says-u-s-sharing-intel-with-taliban>.

13. The Biden Administration shared a list of Americans and American allies with the Taliban, providing the Taliban with a potential “kill list;”<sup>13</sup>
14. The Taliban beat and detained journalists reporting on equal rights protests;<sup>14</sup>
15. The Biden Administration failed to properly vet Afghans fleeing the country, allowing multiple violent felons into the U.S.;<sup>15</sup>
16. The Taliban held six planes hostage, carrying hundreds of evacuees, and refused to allow them to leave Afghanistan;<sup>16</sup>
17. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund froze aid and Afghan accounts, while the Biden Administration sent millions to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan;<sup>17</sup>
18. All Afghan evacuation flights were halted after a measles outbreak in U.S.-run refugee camps;<sup>18</sup>
19. The Taliban brought back executions and strict punishments, including amputations and beheadings, most recently exemplified by hanging a dead body by a crane in Herat;<sup>19</sup>
20. The Biden Administration has not yet publicly objected to the recognition of the Taliban as the government of Afghanistan.

We should have had a hearing a month ago. What are you waiting for? Because as we continue to wait for transparency and accountability, the Biden Administration continues making disastrous decisions with deadly consequences.

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<sup>13</sup> Lara Seligman, et. al., *U.S. officials provided Taliban with names of Americans, Afghan allies to evacuate*, POLITICO (Aug. 26, 2021), <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/08/26/us-officials-provided-taliban-with-names-of-americans-afghan-allies-to-evacuate-506957>.

<sup>14</sup> *Taliban fighters detain, flog, and beat journalists covering protests in Afghanistan*, COMM. TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS (Sept. 8, 2021), <https://cpj.org/2021/09/taliban-fighters-detain-flog-and-beat-journalists-covering-protests-in-afghanistan/>.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen Dinan, *Second major felon found on Afghan evacuation flight*, WASH. TIMES (Sept. 16, 2021), <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2021/sep/16/second-major-felon-found-on-afghan-evacuation-flig/>.

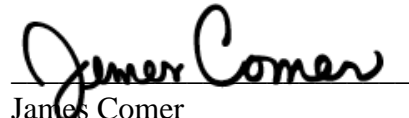
<sup>16</sup> Mark Moore, *Taliban keeping Americans ‘hostage’ by not allowing flights to depart: Rep. McCaul*, N.Y. POST (Sept. 5, 2021), <https://nypost.com/2021/09/05/taliban-holding-6-us-flights-hostage-in-afghanistan-rep-mccaul/>.

<sup>17</sup> *Afghanistan: World Bank halts aid after Taliban takeover*, BBC (Aug. 25, 2021), <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-58325545>; Monique Beals, *US sending \$64M in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan*, THE HILL (Sept. 13, 2021), <https://thehill.com/policy/international/middle-east-north-africa/572038-us-sending-64m-in-humanitarian-aid-to->

<sup>18</sup> Zolan Kanno-Youngs, *Measles Cases Bring Temporary Halt to Afghan’s Arrival in U.S.*, N.Y. TIMES (Sept. 10, 2021), <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/10/us/politics/measles-afghanistan-refugees.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Noah Garfinkle, *Taliban: Executions and strict punishments will return*, AXIOS (Sept. 23, 2021), <https://www.axios.com/taliban-afghanistan-executions-punishments-ae174220-c2ec-41e4-8b40-6e3f06cec9ad.html>; The Associated Press, *Witness Says Taliban Hanged Dead Body in Afghan City’s Main Square*, NPR (Sept. 25, 2021), <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/25/1040671998/witness-says-taliban-hanged-dead-body-in-afghan-citys-main-square>.

Sincerely,



James Comer  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight and Reform



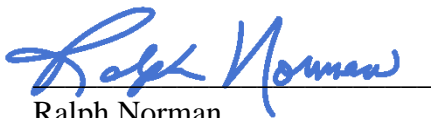
Jody Hice  
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Subcommittee on Government  
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Glenn S. Grothman  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on National Security



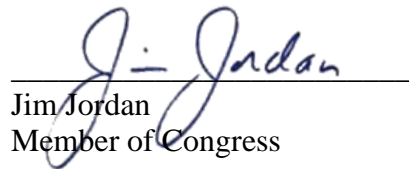
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Consumer Policy



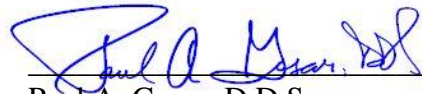
Ralph Norman  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Environment



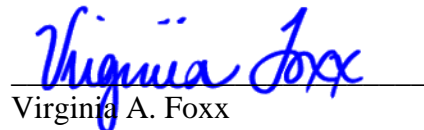
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Jim Jordan  
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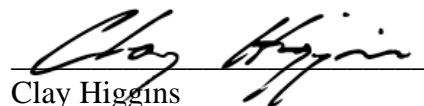
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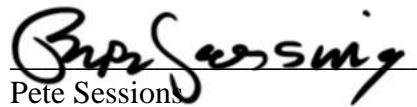
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Bob Gibbs  
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Clay Higgins  
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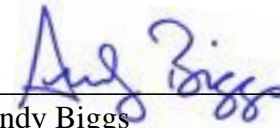


Pete Sessions  
Member of Congress

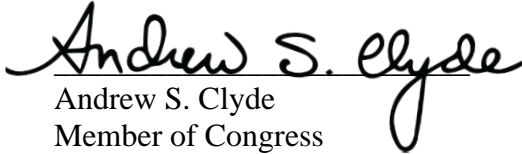
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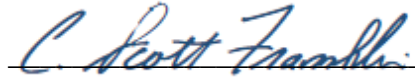
Fred Keller  
Member of Congress



Andy Biggs  
Member of Congress



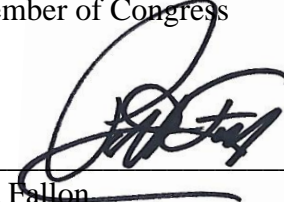
Andrew S. Clyde  
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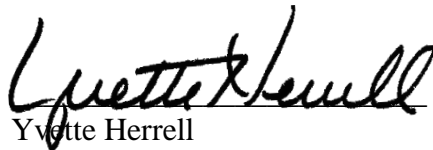
Scott Franklin  
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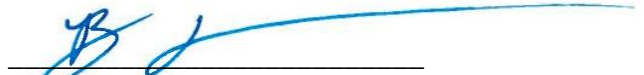
Jake LaTurner  
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Pat Fallon  
Member of Congress



Yvette Herrell  
Member of Congress



Byron Donalds  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Government Operations

The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy

The Honorable Ro Khanna, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Environment

The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties