



ERLC Supports the Afghan Adjustment Act

Southern Baptists believe that all men and women are created in the image of God and should be protected. God has called Christians to care for the vulnerable both at home and abroad and frequently chastises those who fail to protect the widow, orphan, immigrant, and poor (Matthew 25:35-40; James 1:27). The ERLC is committed to advocating for human dignity and justice for all vulnerable people.

Southern Baptists are committed to caring for refugees. In [2016](#), the SBC affirmed that “Scripture calls for and expects God’s people to minister to the sojourner,” that “refugees are people loved by God, made in his image, and that Christian love should be extended to them as special objects of God’s mercy in a world that has displaced them from their homeland,” and urged Southern Baptists to “welcome and adopt refugees into their churches and homes.” Later in [2018](#), the Convention affirmed that it desires to see an immigration system that provides pathways to legal status for migrants while maintaining public safety. Additionally, for the last year, our churches have been on the front lines caring for and welcoming Afghans into our communities.

Following the withdrawal of United States troops from Afghanistan in 2021, thousands of Afghans were brought to the U.S. through humanitarian parole rather than the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. Due to the immense backlogs in the refugee resettlement system, the U.S. used humanitarian parole to evacuate thousands of Afghans who had aided the U.S. military and/or were particularly vulnerable to persecution from the Taliban. Many of these individuals helped our military at great risk to themselves and their families based on promises that they would receive visas to the U.S. Because these individuals were brought to the U.S. after significant screening through parole, they will soon face an expiration of their legal status and will either be added to the already significant asylum backlog, become undocumented, or return to Afghanistan and face intense persecution.

The Afghan Adjustment Act remedies this problem and provides a path to permanent legal status for Afghan parolees in the U.S. This process would allow these evacuees to have the same avenues to permanent residency as those with formal refugee status. This bipartisan bill includes provisions to ensure that eligible Afghan evacuees are subject to additional rigorous vetting and screening procedures before they are granted a permanent status. This vetting provides even more security than our asylum processes and is a safer alternative to allowing these individuals to remain in the country undocumented. The bill also improves and expands pathways for protection for those left behind and at risk in Afghanistan.

The ELRC urges Congress to swiftly pass the Afghan Adjustment Act and provide a pathway to permanence for vulnerable Afghan evacuees.