The National Security Division

WEEKLY REPORT

THE AMERICAN LEGION CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE EVACUATION OF AFGHAN ALLIES

With less than 100 days remaining before the Sept. 11 deadline for U.S. troops to withdraw from Afghanistan, The American Legion demands that the U.S. government act now to extract Afghan interpreters who assisted U.S. troops during the Global War on Terrorism. Failure to do so puts the lives of these translators and their families in serious jeopardy as they face death threats from ISIS, the Taliban, Al Qaeda and others because of their service to the United States.

American Legion National Security Commission Chairman Steve Brennan joined U.S. Reps. Mike Waltz, R-Fla., and Jason Crow, D-Colo., both combat veterans of the war in Afghanistan, in an urgent plea for the White House to "green light" immediate evacuation of all Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) applicants. About 18,000 such Afghans await visa decisions while their lives and those of their families are in danger. Both lawmakers said they likely would not have been at Wednesday's press conference if not for the support from Afghan interpreters. Major media outlets covered the conference in front of the U.S. Capitol.

Since the 9-11 terror attacks, the United States has employed thousands of local Afghan translators to help U.S. forces during the war. In exchange for their help, the United States promised a pathway to U.S. citizenship for Afghan interpreters and their families. Not honoring this promise creates an enormous national security issue for future military operations.

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

This week, The American Legion honored the signing of Juneteenth by President Biden, Supporting this legislation by granting its staff the day to reflect the new federal holiday.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Foreign Relations

- Support for Afghan Interpreters through the Special Immigrant Visa Program – The American Legion advocate for Afghan Interpreters who stood shoulder to shoulder with U.S. Forces and Diplomats contributing to saving countless American lives. The American Legion urges the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to recognize the contributions of Afghan SIV recipients. (Resolution No. 16, 2018) Recognition for Afghan and Iraq Combat Translators.
- Addressing the Forever Wars – The American Legion advocate for elevating diplomacy to build a better, safer world (Resolution No. 22, 2020)

Military Benefits and Quality of Life

- Availability of Healthcare benefits for residents at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in proposed language of the FY22NDAA – The American Legions support funding that provides long-term solvency and viability of the Armed Forces Retirement Home (Resolution No. 107, 2016)
- Quality of Life for Service members and their Families – We owe our military men and women a debt of gratitude we can never repay for all that they — and their families — sacrifice to serve our country. Ensure the Coast Guard is paid – The American Legion supports a fully funded United States Coast Guard (Resolution No. 23, 2016)
- Expedited Citizenship through Honorable Military Service – The American Legion supports measures to ensure the process of naturalization through military service is completed before discharge (Resolution No. 15, 2018)

Law and Order & Homeland Security

- Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure – The American Legion supports refined processes and policies that will enhance interagency cybersecurity, promulgate best practices and standards, and protect critical infrastructure from cyber and other electronic attacks. (Resolution No. 20, 2017)

STAFF ACTIVITY

Aerospace

- Staff reviewed a recent report by the Government Accountability Office regarding the Federal Aviation Administration's update of regulations in commercial space transportation. The Commercial Space Industry is quickly evolving, and the GAO found in their recent report that the FAA continues to update its regulations to reflect recent innovations and evolution in the industry. Conversely, the GAO also highlights, despite the FAA's update of its regulations to reflect the current state of commercial space transportation, the FAA faces continual challenges. For example, the focus on licensing regulations forced the FAA to place other revisions that govern commercial space transportation on hold and the inability regulate crew and passenger safety before 2023. You can read the full GAO report here.

Law and Order & Homeland Security

- Staff attended a hearing a Subcommittee on Oversight, Management & Accountability that discussed Border Security and Immigration. In Central America because of corruption and weak governing of law people are migrating to the United States through the southern border. The people living in countries such as Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador are losing faith that life will get better if they continue to stay. With so many people attempting to cross the border it can became concerning to the U.S making it a threat to our National Security. If the U.S starts providing funds towards programs that help stop corruption and strengthens their democracy, hopefully Central American countries will be able to flourish once again. If corruption is lessened and their support system stabilizes, then less people will flee Central America lowering the number of migrants trying to enter the United States.

Foreign Relations

- Staff attended a Senate Subcommittee hearing on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy Hearing: "Strength Through Partnership: Building the U.S.-Taiwan Relationship". As China continues to escalate tension and threats to Taiwan, the United States must continue to grow its own diplomatic relations with Taiwan and encourage its allies to follow suit. Although the OCP prevents the US from officially recognizing Taiwan as an independent state, the US should provide as much aid and unofficial recognition to Taiwan as possible in order to preserve its support to the US and ensure the presence of a democratic institution in the South China Sea. The increased funding for the GCFT program and the donation of 750,000 vaccine doses are proof that the US is willing to support Taiwan in an unofficial capacity. Both the subcommittee and the State Department express hope that the US's diplomatic relations with Taiwan will help foster new relations between Taiwan and the US's allies.
- Staff also attended the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces Hearing: "FY22 Budget Request for Missile Defense and Missile Defeat Programs". The President's budget request for the fiscal year of 2022 for missile defense and defeat programs was reviewed through defense and defeat policies, and priorities. Hypersonic and ballistic missiles were properly funded for in the past, and will be continued to be funded by the Department of Defense.

DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY
FULFILLING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

- **June 4, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Pentico, W.)**
- **June 7, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From Korean War (Alumbaugh, L.)**
- **June 7, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From World War II (Sitarz, J.)**
- **June 9, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From World War II (Blanton, R.)**
- **June 9, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From Korean War (Foreman, K.)**

PROGRAMS

JUNIOR ROTC AWARDS CEREMONY

JROTC Awards Ceremony at Frankford High School Army Junior ROTC on May 27, 2021. Thank you to The American Legion for their continued support of JROTC programs and youths nationwide.

ANNEX

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