

# Afghan Refugee Advocacy:

## We Need an Afghan Adjustment Act Now!

In August 2021, the U.S. withdrew its military forces from Afghanistan after a 20-year conflict. As part of the Doha agreement, signed by then-President Trump in February 2020, the U.S. agreed to a complete withdrawal of military forces by September 2021. As the Afghan government collapsed, the Taliban quickly seized control of the Kabul and instituted martial law. Thousands of Afghans – those who worked alongside the U.S. military or other forces, as well as ethnic and religious minorities already under threat – have been forced to flee their homes in fear of kidnap, torture, and execution.

**Of the 2.6 million displaced Afghans, 80% are women and children.**



Since January 2021, an estimated 680,000 have been displaced inside the country, and 2.2 million Afghan refugees have found refuge outside the country.

Typically, refugees apply for legal status while residing outside the U.S.; however, the rapid withdrawal from Kabul necessitated a different process for the 65,000 Afghans being evacuated by the U.S.

Afghan arrivals come to the U.S. and undergo background checks, security screening, and health checks. Most Afghan arrivals are on temporary legal status of humanitarian parole for up to two years. They must then apply to adjust their status after being resettled in their new homes in order to stay in the U.S. permanently

**Oklahoma is accepting 1,800 Afghan refugees to make a new home in our communities; however, we lack the legal resources to help our new neighbors gain permanent safety here.**

If they are not able to properly complete the arduous task of status adjustment before their temporary legal status expires, these families risk being returned to the hands of the Taliban. There are only a few attorneys in the state who specialize in asylum applications, and they are already overwhelmed and unlikely to be able to serve all 1,800 of these new neighbors.

In 1966, Congress passed the Cuban Adjustment Act, which allows Cuban natives or citizens who reside in the U.S. to have an easier path to lawful status and permanent residence.

**If Congress passes an Afghan Adjustment Act, Afghan refugees will have a pathway to permanent legal status that will allow them to stay safely in Oklahoma to build new lives.**

**We need our delegates to pass an Afghan Adjustment Act to protect our new neighbors and ease their transition into their new homes.**



**Oklahoma is accepting 1,800 Afghan refugees – the third largest number of any state in the U.S., and the largest number per capita of all 50 states.**

For more information about CAIR Oklahoma, visit [www.cairoklahoma.com](http://www.cairoklahoma.com).

