



One Hundred Sixteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

September 5, 2019

The Honorable Zalmay Khalilzad
Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ambassador Khalilzad:

I invite you to appear at an open hearing of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on a mutually agreed date during the month of September to testify on the Trump Administration's peace plan with the Taliban and the path forward in Afghanistan. This invitation follows two previous requests—a February 26 invitation from myself and Ranking Member McCaul, and an April 8 invitation from every Democratic member of the Committee—to which you have failed to respond.

I am calling this hearing so that Congress and the American people will have the long-overdue opportunity to understand the contours of your negotiations with the Taliban and the potential risks and opportunities that may result. I understand your team has established a framework agreement with the Taliban, and that a copy of this agreement has been disseminated among officials in the Trump Administration and shared with President Ghani's government. Similarly, the American and Afghan people deserve to know what the Administration's diplomatic strategy is for Afghanistan. Your testimony will help inform Members and provide necessary transparency regarding the Administration's Afghanistan strategy.

After nearly two decades of war, we all want to see the fighting in Afghanistan come to an end. But we want to make sure we are negotiating a peace and not simply a withdrawal.

Given the challenges this Committee has faced in getting information from the Trump Administration on this issue, I want to be clear: I do not consider your testimony at this hearing optional. Your appearance before this Committee in an open setting is essential to our ability to carry out our oversight responsibilities. If this letter is insufficient to secure your attendance, I will consider other options that would ensure this hearing takes place in a timely manner.

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If you have any questions about this, please have your staff contact Hearing Coordinator Evan Bursey with the Majority Office at (202) 225-5021. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



ELIOT L. ENGEL
Chairman