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One Hundred Seventeenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
2170 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
[www.foreignaffairs.house.gov](http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov)

September 17, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Blinken,

I am writing to express my strong support for intensifying the State Department's coordination with the heroic volunteer evacuation efforts by private groups such as Digital Dunkirk, Taskforce Pineapple, Allied Airlift 21, and others that are currently assisting those on the ground in Afghanistan. These organizations selflessly continue to assist American citizens, lawful permanent residents, Special Immigrant Visa applicants, and other at-risk Afghans to evacuate in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan last month. In the absence of clear official channels in this chaotic situation, there must be close collaboration and support from your Department, the Pentagon and others on these efforts. You owe it to those in harm's way to help mitigate any risks and assist as much as possible.

You have noted, including during our recent hearing, that your Department is working to secure the safe departure of several charter flights out of Mazar-i-Sharif. These private groups providing evacuation support to Americans and Afghans need your assistance to get planes off the ground. There is an urgent necessity for manifest vetting, flight clearance, and assistance with the many other needs of those waiting for evacuation. The Department of State must assist with onward travel support now, and it is imperative that support be given to those crossing land borders. Time is of the essence.

The President told the American people we would continue to evacuate those left behind from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. As the White House, the State Department, and the Department of Defense have now become officially involved in public/private partnerships with the groups

remaining on the ground, I request to be kept informed on both the progress and challenges we are facing, including on information sharing between the different entities. I also ask that you maintain an open line of communication with the Members of this Committee, specifically by providing us a POC to share information with us on a regular basis and take questions regarding the stranded Americans and others behind enemy lines. As we continue to conduct oversight of this unprecedented situation, with a heightened focus on the working relationship with the various private operations supporting those on the ground, this communication will be critical.

Moving forward, enhanced communication will better enable us to work toward our shared goal of helping Americans and Afghan partners who are desperately seeking evacuation.

Sincerely,



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Michael T. McCaul  
Ranking Member  
House Foreign Affairs Committee