



One Hundred Eighteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2023

The Honorable Samantha Power
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
Ronald Reagan Building
Washington, D.C. 20523

Dear Administrator Power,

We are concerned with the Taliban's misuse and diversion of U.S.-funded humanitarian and development assistance flowing into Afghanistan. Since the disastrous U.S. withdrawal, Congress has appropriated \$2.02 billion for humanitarian and development efforts in Afghanistan¹, and President Biden has transferred \$3.5 billion in Afghan central bank reserves to the Afghan Fund.²

While the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is undeniable, it is essential that U.S.-provided assistance benefits suffering Afghans rather than the Taliban. Reports of Taliban interference in U.S. assistance efforts are growing, and yet Special Investigator General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) John Sopko testified on April 19, 2023 that he was unable to report "on the extent to which our government may be funding the Taliban and other nefarious groups [in Afghanistan] with U.S. taxpayer dollars"³ due to USAID and the State Department's noncompliance with SIGAR's oversight efforts.

To ensure proper oversight of U.S.-funded assistance to Afghanistan, please provide answers to the following questions and requests no later than June 12, 2023.

¹ "2023 High Risk List." *Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction*, 19 Apr. 2023, www.sigar.mil/pdf/spotlight/2023-High-Risk-List.pdf.

² "Fact Sheet: Executive Order to Preserve Certain Afghanistan Central Bank Assets for the People of Afghanistan." *The White House*, 11 Feb. 2022, www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/02/11/fact-sheet-executive-order-to-preserve-certain-afghanistan-central-bank-assets-for-the-people-of-afghanistan/.

³ "Testimony of John F. Sopko, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, Before the Committee on Oversight and Accountability." *Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction*, 19 Apr. 2023, www.sigar.mil/pdf/testimony/SIGAR-23-22-TY.pdf.

1. What percent and dollar amount of USAID assistance to Afghanistan is paid to the Taliban for taxes, fees, rent, bills, or anything else? Please provide an itemized list of all such expenses.
2. Please detail the conversations USAID employees and contractors have had with the Taliban on humanitarian access and operational independence of our partners. What assurances, if any, have been provided, and are there certain geographical areas/provinces in Afghanistan that USAID is prioritizing?
3. Please explain how U.S foreign assistance programs are being implemented in a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and what steps are being taken to mitigate diversion, security threats to partners, and waste, fraud, and abuse.
 - a. What specific safeguards are in place to prevent U.S. taxpayer-supported aid from benefiting the Taliban?
4. Please provide a full breakdown of all U.S.-funded foreign assistance programs and activities in Afghanistan, specifying by amount, account, geographic focus, and implementing partner. Please include the names of all contractors performing third-party monitoring on U.S.-funded programs.
 - a. Please also identify specific measures of success for each program that will help Congress judge the effectiveness of U.S.-funded assistance in Afghanistan moving forward.
5. USAID reported that “Taliban officials have increased their unannounced visits to implementing partner offices, requests for information about NGO operations, requests for signed MOUs, and demands to be more involved in project decision making and implementation.”⁴ Please describe how USAID responds to such instances of Taliban interference.
 - a. Please share all memorandums of understanding (MOUs) that USAID has authorized implementing partners to sign with the Taliban.
6. What is USAID’s staffing footprint in third-party countries focused on Afghan programs and management?
7. Please provide a full list of the benchmarks and conditions under which the Administration would support disbursements from the Afghan Fund to Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB).

⁴ “2023 High Risk List.” *Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction*, 19 Apr. 2023, www.sigar.mil/pdf/spotlight/2023-High-Risk-List.pdf.

8. How has the Taliban's ban of Afghan women working for NGOs affected USAID's implementation, oversight, and monitoring of aid in Afghanistan?
9. Is USAID committed to opposing male-only implementation of assistance in Afghanistan?
 - a. Please provide a list of all programs that currently use male-only implementation and a justification as to why.
10. How has the Taliban's takeover of Afghan government institutions impacted USAID's ability to receive accurate data about health, welfare, hunger, and other measures associated with assistance?

We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee



JOE WILSON
Chairman
Subcommittee for Middle East,
North Africa, and Central Asia



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress



DARRELL ISSA
Member of Congress



ANN WAGNER
Member of Congress



BRIAN MAST
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress

MICHAEL WALTZ
Member of Congress

THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.
Member of Congress

MICHAEL LAWLER
Member of Congress

CORY MILLS
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Rich McCormick in black ink, consisting of the letters 'R', 'M', and 'C' in a stylized, cursive font.

RICH McCORMICK, M.D.
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Keith Self in black ink, featuring a stylized 'K' and 'S' in a cursive script.

KEITH SELF
Member of Congress