



August 27, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken
U.S. Department of State
Office of the Secretary
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Office of the Secretary
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20395

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Mayorkas:

On behalf of the Association of American Universities (AAU) and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), associations whose membership includes more than 200 of our nation's top research universities, we write to express our appreciation for the Biden administration's efforts to safely evacuate United States citizens, U.S. military personnel, and certain Afghans and their families who contributed to U.S. efforts in the country. While many have safely evacuated, our members are concerned for those Afghans they continue to assist who remain in the country with no clear exit plan.

AAU's and APLU's members are deeply concerned about the situation on the ground and are providing significant resources to aid in evacuation and resettlement efforts. They are working with humanitarian organizations to assist with evacuations and are providing scholarships for Afghan students and scholars to study in the United States. Our member institutions are communicating with hundreds of individuals and their families currently in Afghanistan, including those who are involved in university-led research and education programs; international students and scholars connected to our campuses; and alumni who have been unable to leave the country safely at this time. Our membership is keenly focused on providing the highest level of support to this population, including assistance with their safe evacuation and fulfillment of other critical humanitarian needs.

We offer any assistance we can provide to the Departments of State and Homeland Security for efforts that are underway – and particularly for humanitarian missions and efforts to resettle and support Afghan students in the United States. As U.S. efforts evolve from evacuation to resettlement, please look to our members and the broader academic community as willing partners in this endeavor. We are committed to working with you in support of the government's continued efforts to ensure a safe resolution for the many individuals whose safety and well-being is threatened.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara R. Snyder".

Barbara R. Snyder, President
Association of American Universities

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter McPherson".

Peter McPherson, President
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

cc: Dr. Eric Lander, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy