

## Adams Votes to Honor our Promise, Protect our Afghan Partners



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## Adams Votes to Honor our Promise, Protect our Afghan Partners

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, **Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12)** voted for H.R. 3985, the ***Averting Loss of Life and Injury by Expediting SIVs (ALLIES) Act***, legislation to protect Afghan interpreters, contractors, security personnel and other partners who face deadly retribution by the Taliban for their work with the United States government. This bipartisan legislation expands and expedites the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) process, which helps Afghan partners and their families safely immigrate to the United States, and is a responsible and necessary action to wind down the war in Afghanistan.

*“During our two decades at war in Afghanistan, we promised to protect the people who worked and fought by our side. Today, we honor that commitment,” said Rep. Adams. “Because they put their lives on the line to support our troops, these courageous Afghans now face deadly retribution in their own country. Passing the ALLIES Act is an urgent, responsible step to help our loyal partners and their families escape violence. I am proud to support this bipartisan legislation to save innocent lives and repay our debt for the sacrifice of those who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with our troops.”*

Created in 2009, the Afghan SIV program offers visas to interpreters, contractors and security personnel who worked with the U.S. government in Afghanistan, who now live in fear of violent retribution by the Taliban. However, severe delays and backlogs have left many applicants waiting years for their visas – and hundreds have been killed before receiving approval. As the United States continues the necessary process of withdrawing troops from Afghanistan, it is an urgent priority to ensure the safety of Afghan SIV applicants and their families.

The ALLIES Act, which was introduced by Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO) and the bipartisan Honoring our Promises Working Group, increases the number of available visas by 8,000, eliminates redundant paperwork and clarifies eligibility standards for the program. This legislation also strengthens protections for surviving spouses and children of deceased SIV applicants, helping more of them retain their SIV eligibility. These changes will help streamline visa processing without compromising the strict background check and vetting procedures in place to protect national security.

The Biden-Harris Administration supports this legislation. Additionally, the Administration announced this week plans to evacuate 2,500 Afghan partners to Fort Lee in Virginia while they await final processing of their visas, as the evacuation process begins.

**Congresswoman Alma Adams** represents North Carolina's 12th Congressional District (Charlotte, Huntersville, Mecklenburg County) and serves as Vice Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture. Additionally, she serves on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Education & Labor Committee, where she serves as Chair of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee.

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