

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 5, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
301 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Ur Jaddou
Director U.S Citizenship
and Immigration Services
111 Massachusetts Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Secretary Mayorkas, and Director Jaddou,

I write to reiterate the [concerns](#) laid out by my colleagues Senator Markey and Congressman Moulton and others regarding the “restrictive and inconsistent approach the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has adopted” in relation to humanitarian parole applications submitted by more than 40,000 Afghans in recent months. As you are aware, in just a matter of days, Afghanistan’s citizens found themselves in a position of vulnerability, facing a future in which their human and civil rights are at risk under Taliban control. For far too many, humanitarian parole is the only viable option and while the U.S. has taken steps to provide assistance, we must do more to process and adjudicate cases in a timely manner.

I am gravely concerned for the lives of the more than 40,000 individuals who await a response on their pending cases, and the many more who are unfamiliar with the humanitarian parole process and may be left behind. My casework team, like countless others have worked tirelessly to process and submit constituent requests related to this crisis. Unfortunately, responses to those requests and the adjudication of those cases have been slow. For those reasons, I respectfully request an answer to the following questions:

1. As of January 5, 2022, how many Afghanistan humanitarian parole applications have been received, including the number that have been favorably and unfavorably adjudicated.
2. As of January 5, 2022, how many officers are adjudicating Afghanistan humanitarian parole applications and is this number expected to increase or decrease for 2022?
3. Does USCIS plan to utilize email notifications when responding to individuals granted that mailing systems are non-existent or unreliable in third countries?
4. Are there any barriers, administrative or otherwise that is resulting in processing times to be prolonged? If so, are there any plans in place to address this?
5. According to the Department of Homeland Security Office of [Inspector General's report](#), USCIS’ reliance on paper files has limited its ability to process benefits. Currently, USCIS can electronically process only 17 of 102 benefits it adjudicates. Are there any plans to process humanitarian parole applications electronically in the near future? Online submissions would facilitate the process for individuals currently taking temporary residence in third countries to submit all necessary documentation in a timely manner.

The United States must continue to prioritize the safety and well-being of Afghan nationals seeking refuge. While parole does not grant immigration status, it provides individuals with a sense of stability, especially during these tumultuous times. I look forward to your responses to these questions and the questions posed by my colleagues related to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raúl M. Grijalva". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress