



POLITICS**Afghanistan****Add Topic**

These 16 Republicans voted against speeding up visas for Afghans fleeing the Taliban

**Mabinty Quarshie**

USA TODAY

Published 4:27 p.m. ET Aug. 17, 2021

Key Points

16 Republicans voted against a bill that would speed up visas for Afghanistan civilians.

The ALLIES Act passed overwhelmingly in the House.

Many of the 16 Republicans have continued to attack Biden over Afghanistan.

Some of the Republican House members who this week excoriated President Joe Biden's strategy to pull U.S. troops out of Afghanistan and evacuate Afghan civilians voted last month against legislation to speed up the visa application process for Afghan citizens.

The House overwhelmingly passed a bill to make it easier for Afghans who assisted the American military to relocate to the U.S. The Averting Loss of Life and Injury by Expediting SIVs Act (ALLIES) Act was approved by a 407-16 vote on July 22. The 16 "no" votes were all from Republicans.

The ALLIES Act removes some application requirements for Afghan special immigrant visas that led to long backlogs and wait times. It also boosts the number of visas for Afghans by an additional 8,000 to 19,000. Rep. Jason Crow, D-Colo., introduced the bill in June, with 24 bipartisan cosponsors.

“We have a moral obligation to make sure the American handshake matters, that we are keeping our promises,” Crow told Colorado Public Radio. “We have to show to the world that our word is our bond.”

Biden has faced withering bipartisan criticisms for his handling of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, which has led to the Taliban's return to power.

More: U.S. evacuations flights restart from Kabul as Taliban declares 'amnesty' for government officials

Stunning photo: More than 600 people pack a US Air Force plane leaving Afghanistan amid siege, reports say

These Republican House members voted against the bill:

Rep. Andy Biggs of Arizona
Rep. Lauren Boebert of Colorado
Rep. Mo Brooks of Alabama
Rep. Scott DesJarlais of Tennessee
Rep. Jeff Duncan of South Carolina
Rep. Bob Good of Virginia
Rep. Paul Gosar of Arizona
Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia
Rep. Kevin Hern of Oklahoma
Rep. Jody Hice of Georgia
Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky
Rep. Barry Moore of Alabama
Rep. Scott Perry of Pennsylvania
Rep. Bill Posey of Florida
Rep. Matt Rosendale of Montana
Rep. Chip Roy of Texas

The U.S. military on Tuesday continued to evacuate American citizens and Afghan civilians who helped American troops after reports of chaos at Hamid Karzai International Airport Monday. Afghans rushed the tarmac and clung to already loaded airplanes, desperate to escape. At least seven people died in the melee.

As reports of Afghan people fleeing the Taliban spread across social media, many of these lawmakers attacked Biden.

More: 'I am begging you guys:' Florida veteran fights to bring his Afghan interpreter to the U.S.

Learn: 'They will slaughter us': Afghans who worked with US beg for visas as troop withdrawal looms

In a tweet Monday, Biggs wrote, "Let's set the record straight before Biden & co. starts blaming Trump for the Afghanistan disaster. Biden abandoned Trump's peace plan & exit strategy & haphazardly created his own. Biden is FULLY responsible for this absolute wreck."

After Biden's address to the nation Monday, Boebert tweeted, "The American people are not arguing that we should have stayed in Afghanistan. We're furious that you abandoned Americans on the ground and are the most incompetent President in American history."

Crow, the lead sponsor of the ALLIES Act, responded to another one of Boebert's tweets Sunday in which she wrote, "Joe has a 48 year history of making bad decisions. Add this weekend's foreign policy decisions to the list."

"Wait a minute," Crow quote-tweeted Boebert. "A few weeks ago you were 1 of only 16 members of Congress who voted against my bill to expand and speed up the visa program to evacuate and save our Afghan partners."

DesJarlais slammed Biden in a statement: "A hasty withdrawal that was given zero thought left our citizens in danger and threatened the security of classified information falling into the hands of terrorists," he said.

"President Biden and his administration were reckless and deserve to be held accountable for the disastrous mistakes they made in our departure from this country."

More: 'They already looking for me': An Afghan interpreter on the last 24 hours

Related: Afghanistan mayor worries the Taliban may 'kill' her: Will women be oppressed again?

Massie singled out American arrogance in a tweet, "The hubris that led the US to spend 20 years in Afghanistan is the same hubris that caused the withdrawal to become an emergency evacuation."

Duncan agreed with Biden's decision to pull troops out of Afghanistan but objected to how Biden went about the withdrawal.

"I don't disagree with @JoeBiden's comments on stopping endless wars," Duncan tweeted. "I agree with him, I've said I agree with him, and I disagree with many in my party on this

issue. But THE WAY he's implemented this withdrawal is a completely separate and deeply troubling issue."

In a statement, Hern laid the blame for the havoc in Afghanistan on Biden's shoulders.

"The truth is, Biden owns this. This is a tragedy of his own making. Biden, Secretary of State Blinken, and Defense Secretary Austin either lied to the American people, or they are spectacularly incompetent," Hern said in a statement. "They reassured us that Afghanistan would not fall, that the Taliban would not take Kabul, and that Americans would not be put in harm's way. Not only were they wrong, they were proven wrong almost immediately."

Moore called the American retreat "a painful betrayal of our Afghan allies" and "an unforgivable insult to the thousands of American who spilled their blood on Afghan soil" in a statement.

Rosendale agreed with Biden's decision to leave but said in a tweet, "the chaos we're seeing is not an excuse to flood our country with refugees from Afghanistan."