



**HEADQUARTERS  
RESOLUTE SUPPORT  
KABUL, AFGHANISTAN  
APO AE 09356**



May 20, 2016

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman, Armed Services Committee  
United States Senate  
241 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman,

I would like to express my support for the continuation of the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program. It is my firm belief that abandoning this program would significantly undermine our credibility and the 15 years of tremendous sacrifice by thousands of Afghans on behalf of Americans and Coalition partners. These men and women who have risked their lives and have sacrificed much for the betterment of Afghanistan deserve our continued commitment. Failure to adequately demonstrate a shared understanding of their sacrifices and honor our commitment to any Afghan who supports the International Security Assistance Force and Resolute Support missions could have grave consequences for these individuals and bolster the propaganda of our enemies.

During my previous three tours in Afghanistan, I have seen many Afghans put themselves and their families at risk to assist our forces in pursuit of stability for their country. The stories of these interpreters and translators are heart-wrenching. They followed and supported our troops in combat at great personal risk, ensuring the safety and effectiveness of Coalition members on the ground. Many have been injured or killed in the line of duty, a testament to their commitment, resolve, and dedication to support our interests. Continuing our promise of the American dream is more than in our national interest, it is a testament to our decency and long-standing tradition of honoring our allies.

Afghanistan faces a continuing threat from both the Afghan insurgency and extremist networks. We must remain committed to helping those Afghans who, at great personal risk, have helped us in our mission. This is the second year the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) are in the lead for security. They are fighting hard and fighting well for a stable, secure Afghanistan. The vast majority of the SIV applicants have served as interpreters and translators for our troops. They have exposed themselves and compromised the safety of their families to provide critical situational awareness and guidance, both of which have helped save countless Afghan, American and Coalition lives.

Thank you for your continued support of American troops in Afghanistan.

Very Respectfully,

John W. Nicholson  
General, U.S. Army

Commander, Resolute Support /  
United States Forces – Afghanistan