

May 2, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear President Trump and Secretary Noem:

As faith leaders from across the United States, we write to urge your Administration to act swiftly to protect Afghan Christians from deportation to Afghanistan, where they face grave threats to their safety and their very lives because of their faith.

President Trump, your Administration has rightly prioritized international religious freedom as a central pillar of American foreign policy. Under your leadership, we have seen unprecedented efforts to elevate the cause of persecuted religious minorities worldwide — hosting the historic Ministerials to Advance Religious Freedom, launching the International Religious Freedom Alliance, and taking courageous actions against regimes that persecute religious minorities, you have championed the rights of the oppressed. We are deeply grateful for these efforts.

Today, we urge you to continue this vital work by ensuring that Afghan Christians, among the most vulnerable religious minorities in the world, are not returned to danger.

Afghanistan is among the most dangerous places in the world for Christians. Conversion from Islam is considered apostasy under Taliban rule and is punishable by imprisonment or execution. According to reports, including by [Fox News](#) and [Christian Broadcasting Network](#), Afghan Christians living in the United States now face the terrifying prospect of forced return to a country where their faith puts them at daily risk of death. Many of these individuals found safety in America only to now be told they must self-deport within a week — an impossible timeline given the grave dangers they would face.

We are particularly concerned that a group of Afghan Christians has received notice that they had only one week to self-deport, despite the fact that the U.S. asylum process often takes years to complete. To demand that Afghan Christians self-deport within days effectively strips them of that opportunity, placing their lives in direct jeopardy. **Forcing them to return under such circumstances would be a tragedy in the making and a blight on America's record of defending persecuted Christians.**

One of the most essential tools the United States has historically used to uphold religious freedom is the U.S. refugee resettlement program. Throughout history, in both Republican and Democratic administrations, refugee resettlement has offered a lifeline to those escaping religious oppression, from Soviet Jews to Iraqi Yazidis to Christians in countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Burma and other countries that persecute followers of Jesus. It is critical that our nation continue to provide refuge to those whose lives are at risk because of their faith, including Afghan Christians. **Protecting them is not**

only consistent with America's values; it is a direct extension of your Administration's commitment to defending religious liberty around the globe.

We respectfully ask you to ensure that Afghan Christians in danger are granted protection in the United States. Doing so would fulfill your Administration's commitment to advancing international religious freedom and demonstrate America's steadfast support for those who risk everything to live their faith.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for your continued leadership on behalf of religious freedom.

Sincerely,

Myal Greene
President / CEO
World Relief

Tim Goeglein
Vice President, Government and External Relations
Focus on the Family

Brent Leatherwood
President
Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission,
of the Southern Baptist Convention

Travis Weber
Vice President, Policy and Government Affairs
Family Research Council

Dr. Walter Kim
President
National Association of Evangelicals

Bryant Wright
Former President, Send Relief and Former President
Southern Baptist Convention (2010-2012)

Matias Perttula
Director
Save Armenia: A Judeo-Christian Alliance

Nadine Maenza
President
IRF Secretariat

Brian Orme
CEO
Global Christian Relief
Founding Director – Church Ambassador Network

Greg Baker
Executive Vice President
The Family Leader

Ryan Brown
President / CEO
Open Doors US

Dan Degner
President
Wisconsin Family Council

Micah Fries
Director
Multi-Faith Neighbors Network

Carroll Conley
Director
Church Ambassador Network of Maine

Bri Stensrud
Director

Mark Tooley
President

Women of Welcome

Institute on Religion & Democracy