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Immigration

Resolution to Fund Government Includes Provisions to Aid Afghans at Risk

Legal Update

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By Immigration Group

This article was prepared with the assistance of ABIL, the Alliance of Business Immigration Lawyers, of which Loan Huynh, Fredrikson Immigration Department Chair, is a member.

The continuing resolution to keep the federal government open until December 3, 2021, was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden on September 30, 2021. Among other things, the legislation provides about \$6.3 billion to aid Afghans at risk. Selected highlights include:

- \$2.2 billion for overseas humanitarian, disaster, and civic aid until September 30, 2023, for the support of Operation Allies Welcome (evacuation/resettlement of Afghans) by the Department of Defense.
- \$21.5 million for CDC-wide activities and program support until September 30, 2022, for medical support, screening, and other related public health activities related to Afghan arrivals and refugees.
- Afghans arriving with humanitarian parole are to receive the same services as refugees, including reception, placement, and other entitlement programs like food assistance. Services include healthcare, emergency housing, English language classes, job training, and case management. Eligible Afghans are those paroled into the United States between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2022; those paroled into the United States after September 30, 2022; and either the spouse or child of such a parolee or the parent or legal guardian of an unaccompanied child paroled during that period.
- \$1.68 billion for refugee and entrant assistance until September 30, 2023, under Operation Allies Welcome for carrying out refugee and entrant assistance activities in support of citizens or nationals of Afghanistan paroled into the United States; for example, grants or contracts with qualified nonprofit organizations to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services during temporary housing and after resettlement, housing assistance, medical assistance, legal assistance, and case management. An additional \$7.77 million for child and family service programs is available until September 30, 2022.

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- \$415 million for migration and refugee assistance to address humanitarian needs in, and to assist refugees from, Afghanistan.
- Within 45 days of enactment, the law directs the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, State and Homeland Security to jointly submit a strategy on Afghan evacuee resettlement to Congress describing agency roles and responsibilities, vetting, the immigration status of each Afghan and anticipated costs. “Afghan evacuee” is defined as a person whose evacuation from Afghanistan to the United States, or a location overseas controlled by the United States, was facilitated by the United States as part of Operation Allies Refuge.