

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

November 4, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

In the wake of the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan, we write to urge your Administration to develop an interagency plan to preserve the political, economic, social, and basic human rights of Afghan women and girls. This plan should also address how the United States will lead international organizations, such as the United Nations, in holding the Taliban accountable.


American disengagement from Afghanistan puts at risk hard-won gains for Afghan women and girls. Women earned college degrees, joined the workforce, and participated in Afghanistan's public life. Last year an estimated 3.5 million girls were in school, with 100,000 women enrolled in public and private universities. Women also began to succeed in business and government. Last year, the Afghanistan Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry reported over 1,000 female entrepreneurs emerged, and women were elected to senior positions in the Afghan government.

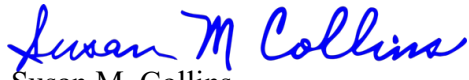
However, lacking a legitimate Afghan government and military forces to protect them, women and girls are now suffering the predations of a Taliban regime with a track record of brutalizing, isolating, and denying them life and liberty. Taliban leaders who promised that women would be treated well under the new government are not upholding those commitments. Women have been the victims of targeted beatings and killings and are banned from leaving home without a male guardian. Afghanistan's former government, while flawed, was bound by a constitution that promoted human rights, and freedom of speech and assembly for both women and men.

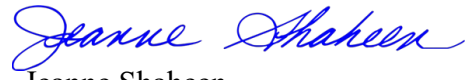
You have committed to press the Taliban to uphold the rights of women and girls, and you have stated that America will maintain an enduring partnership with the people of Afghanistan resisting Taliban rule. We will advise, support, and enable those efforts through legislation and engagement with your Administration. Afghan women and girls need our action now. We request and look forward to a briefing from the Administration on your plan.


Sincerely,

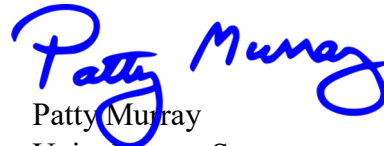
  
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United States Senator


  
Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator

  
Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator


  
Marsha Blackburn  
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Patty Murray  
United States Senator

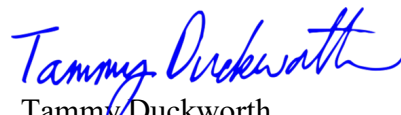
  
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