

United States Senate

August 30, 2021

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Jake Sullivan
U.S. National Security Advisor
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Secretary Austin, Secretary Blinken, and Mr. Sullivan,

During a televised press conference on August 20, 2021, President Biden looked the American people in the eye and told them: "Let me be clear. Any American who wants to come home, we will get you home." Almost immediately, senior Administration officials, including Secretary Blinken, tried to walk back President Biden's pledge, both in public comments and in private briefs with members of Congress. Today, as the last U.S. military aircraft departed Kabul, Secretary Blinken estimated there were possibly 200 American citizens on the ground in Afghanistan who wanted to leave. These Americans, forsaken by President Biden, are now trapped behind enemy lines, dependent on the Taliban's good graces to get out of Afghanistan.

For weeks, I have questioned senior White House and Department of Defense officials about who selected the August 31, 2021 deadline, if any military considerations required maintaining that deadline, and why the deadline could not be moved to ensure every American was evacuated from Afghanistan when we had the military assets on the ground to safely do the job. I am still waiting for answers to these and other related questions.

My Alaska constituents and their fellow Americans are also demanding answers to these basic questions, and accountability and responsibility for the hasty, chaotic, and botched withdrawal from Afghanistan, which has left hundreds of Americans stranded behind Taliban lines and our country more vulnerable to international terrorism than at any time since the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Sincerely,



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator