

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 3, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We are writing to express our concern regarding the impending expiration of the cooperative agreement between the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), set to end May 31, 2020. Since its creation, AUAF's dedication to educational empowerment of the next generation of Afghans has played a pivotal role in U.S. foreign policy and the long-term stability of Afghanistan. However, the absence of a commitment for continued assistance from the U.S. government has forced AUAF to begin preparations for its permanent closure. We urge you to direct USAID to promptly provide AUAF with sufficient funding, as appropriated by Congress, to keep this critical university running.

AUAF is not only a respected educational institution offering some of the highest quality academic programs in Afghanistan, but also a testament to American support for Afghanistan's security and our commitment to women's empowerment worldwide. AUAF has been a pioneer in prioritizing women's civic and economic equality in Afghanistan. The university's dedicated International Center for Afghan Women's Economic Development provides equal educational opportunities to women and promotes active, meaningful roles for women in Afghan development. It is this kind of work that both Congress and the Administration prioritized through the passage and implementation of the *Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017* and the subsequent release of the United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security. The Administration furthered its commitment to these principles by establishing the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative last February, spearheaded by Ivanka Trump.

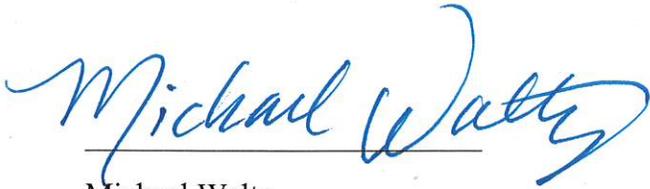
Given Afghanistan's security climate, AUAF requires significant funding annually to adequately address the security and operational needs of the university, which cannot be met without assistance from the United States. Most recently, Congress demonstrated support for the American University of Afghanistan through the passage of H.R. 1865, the *Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020*, which was signed into law. Specifically, this legislation provides funding for institutions of higher education in Kabul, Afghanistan that are accessible to both women and men and partner with a United States-based American institution. Such criteria describes AUAF.

While we are aware of the concerns stemming from AUAF's administrative disorganization in the wake of the August 2016 terrorist attack on the university, AUAF has since resolved these issues by appointing new leadership and meeting all relevant requirements set by USAID. Additionally, we have been briefed by members of AUAF's Board of Trustees and we are confident in the university's ability to continue complying with, and implementing, all recommendations from the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan (SIGAR). Despite the numerous obstacles facing AUAF like the 2016 attack and continued security threats, the university has continued to make strides to improve higher education throughout the country.

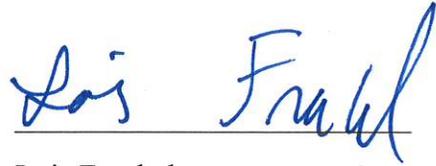
The United States has long stood with Afghans as they confront the challenges of terrorism and strive for peace. AUAF is an integral component to the long-term stability of Afghanistan and therefore, the long-term security of the United States. By ignoring the importance of allocating funding and simply allowing AUAF to shut its doors, the United States is jeopardizing the security of future Afghan generations.

Therefore, we respectfully urge you to honor the priorities of women, peace, and security set forth by Congress and the Administration by continuing funding for the American University of Afghanistan.

Sincerely,



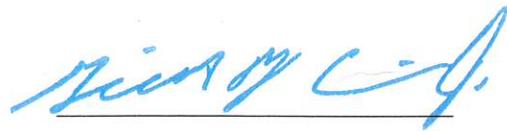
Michael Waltz
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



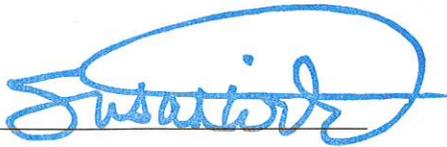
Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



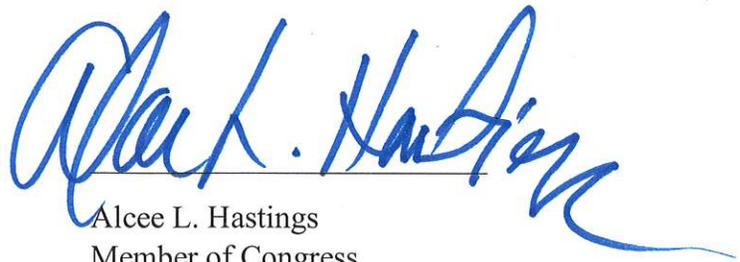
Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



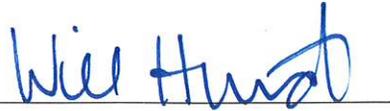
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Susan Wild
Member of Congress



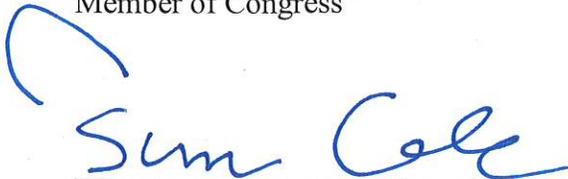
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



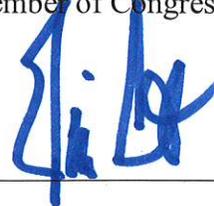
Will Hurd
Member of Congress



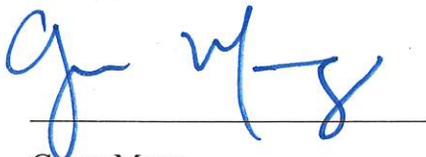
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



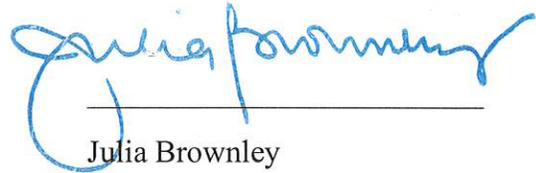
Tom Cole
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



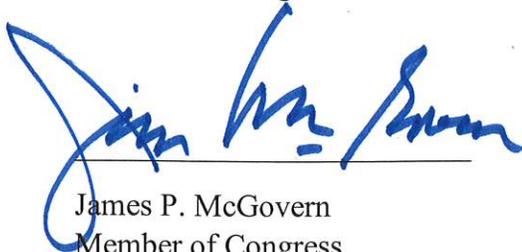
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



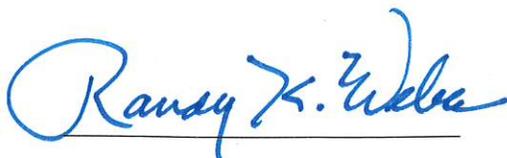
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress



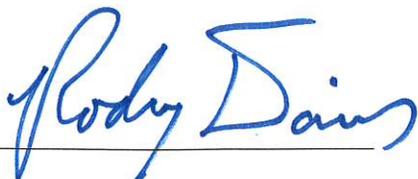
Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
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Angie Craig
Member of Congress



Rodney Davis
Member of Congress



Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress



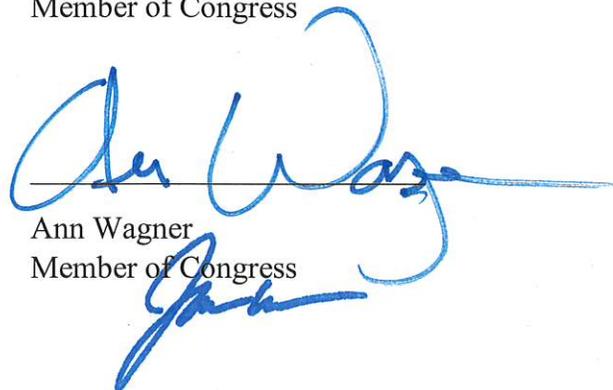
Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



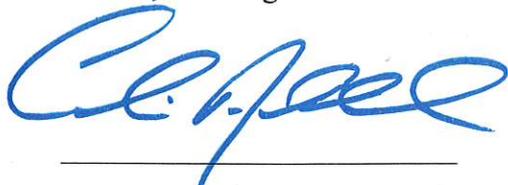
Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress



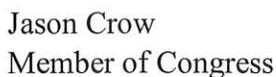
Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress



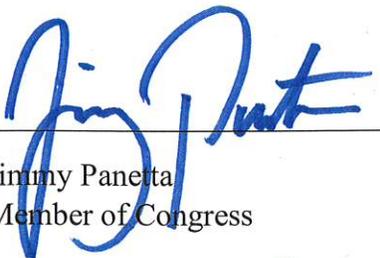
Ann Wagner
Member of Congress



Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress



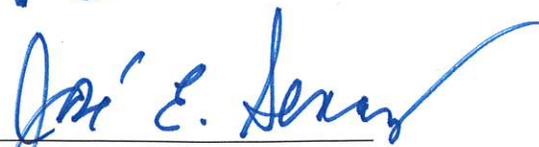
Jason Crow
Member of Congress



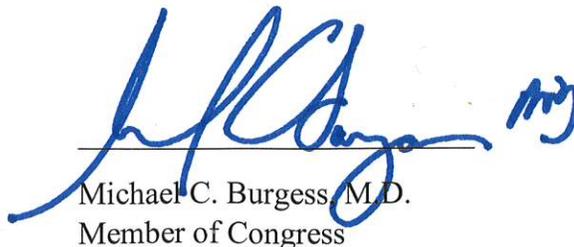
Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



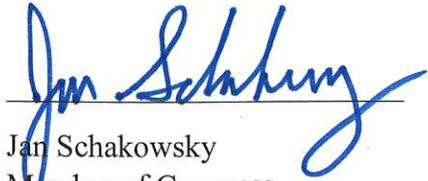
Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



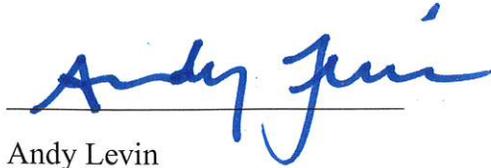
Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



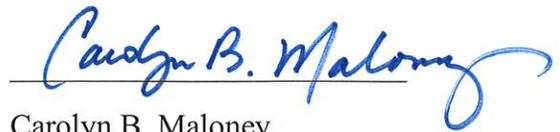
Andy Levin
Member of Congress



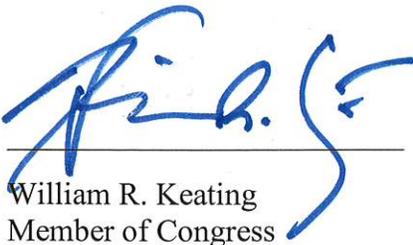
Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



David E. Price
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
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