

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

DAVID M. WEINBERG, STAFF DIRECTOR
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LAURA W. KILBRIDE, CHIEF CLERK

October 25, 2024

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, S.W.
Washington D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

We, as Members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC), are writing to request information concerning the recent arrest of two Afghan nationals in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, who were allegedly plotting an Election Day terrorist attack, on behalf of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS).¹ According to the unsealed criminal complaint, Nasir Ahmad Tawhedi entered the United States on September 9, 2021, using a Special Immigration Visa (SIV), shortly after the Biden-Harris administration's disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan.²

After entering the United States, Tawhedi promoted ISIS propaganda, sent funds to known charities linked to ISIS support networks, and liquidated all assets to purchase weapons; with the remaining funds intended for the ISIS Treasury.³ Tawhedi was working with a juvenile co-conspirator with legal permanent resident status who had entered the United States on March 27, 2018, using a SIV. According to reports, the two Afghan nationals planned to carry out a violent, armed attack on Election Day.⁴

This alarming incident adds to a growing list of similar security breaches, raising serious concerns about the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) ability to effectively protect our homeland. The screening and vetting processes under the Biden-Harris administration are clearly failing, allowing criminals and individuals with terrorist links to exploit vulnerabilities in the system. Given the significant threat to American lives, it is imperative that we receive detailed information to fully understand the scope of these issues.

For this reason, we request the following information as soon as possible, but no later than November 8, 2024:

¹ Glenn Thrush and Adam Goldman, *Afghan Man Arrested on Charges of Plotting Election Day Attack*, New York Times, (October 8, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/08/us/politics/election-day-attack-afghanistan-isis.html>

² Criminal Complaint, *United States v. Nasir Ahmad Tawhedi*, No. M-24-760-SM at 7 (W.D. Okla. Oct. 8, 2024).

³ Press Release, U.S. Dep't of Justice, *Afghan National Arrested for Plotting an Election Day Terrorist Attack in the Name of ISIS* (Oct. 8, 2024).

⁴ *Id.*

1. All DHS records, including component records and complete Alien Files (A-Files), related to all of the individuals arrested in connection with this terrorist plot, including their immigration status and criminal history;
2. All communications from or between DHS, CBP, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) regarding these individuals, including but not limited to their immigration status and criminal history;
3. All documents and communications regarding the arrival and entry of these individuals in the U.S.;
4. Any addresses provided by these individuals upon entering the U.S.;
5. All documents and communications related to these individuals' personal information processed through international and national criminal databases;
6. All documents and communications related to any asylum or protection claims made by these individuals, including the type and reason provided;
7. All communications that DHS, CBP, or ICE had with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in relation to these individuals, including but not limited to any arrests or detentions by any state jurisdiction; and
8. All documents and communications detailing their transit through other countries;
9. All documents sufficient to show all derogatory information in the Terrorist Screening Data Set associated with the two Afghan nationals arrested on October 7, 2024.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rand Paul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "P".

Rand Paul, M.D.
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
And Governmental Affairs

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rick Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "S".

Rick Scott
United States Senator

Roger W. Marshall

Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator

James Lankford

James Lankford
United States Senator