



Homeland Security

September 9, 2025

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley:

Thank you for your June 25, 2024 letter regarding the vetting of Afghan evacuees.

In your letter, you asked what steps the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has taken, or plans to take, to close the five recommendations from the May 6, 2024, Office of Inspector General report, "DHS Has a Fragmented Process for Identifying and Resolving Derogatory Information for Operation Allies Welcome Parolees."

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) responded to the report¹ on August 9, 2024. In early 2025, USCIS reviewed the prior response to ensure consistency with current priorities. The following are the most recent updates:

- **Recommendation 1:** We recommend the Director of USCIS develop USCIS guidelines on terminating parole for aliens who came to the U.S. during Operation Allies Welcome and making referrals to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for enforcement action.

DHS is taking action to identify formerly paroled aliens who are no longer authorized to remain in the United States, pursuant to Executive Orders and a Presidential Proclamation setting forth the current administration's expectations for addressing enforcement action against aliens whose parole has expired. Accordingly, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), ICE, and USCIS already have access to databases identifying the date on which a specific alien's parole expires. For example, CBP's Arrival and Departure Information System records all travelers admitted or paroled into the United States.

On July 23, 2025, USCIS and ICE jointly issued the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for Referrals to ICE from USCIS for enforcement action. USCIS will revise its existing USCIS Referrals to ICE policy to align with the updated MOA to support program office and directorate implementation of the MOA. USCIS anticipates completing the efforts to update internal policy within 180 days of the last signatory of the document.

¹ <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2024-05/OIG-24-24-May24.pdf>

- Recommendation 2: We recommend the Director of USCIS and Director of ICE update the USCIS-ICE MOA in consideration of USCIS data access limitations.

USCIS and ICE jointly issued the MOA on July 23, 2025. The updated MOA better aligns with each agency's current capabilities, respective missions, and priorities. It also formalizes the mechanics of the agencies' cooperation and communication and defines precise referrals to ICE criteria and referral parameters. The MOA also includes special guidance on utilizing and sharing classified information for ICE and USCIS collaboration on national security and public safety concerns.

- Recommendation 3: We recommend the Director of USCIS and Director of ICE continue to review and update records for Operation Allies Welcome parolees to improve data accuracy of individual records.

USCIS concluded its efforts to resolve the data challenges for this population in January 2025. USCIS identified all Alien registration numbers (A-numbers) and associated Form I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) numbers assigned to Operation Allies Welcome parolees, confirmed records matches were integrated into relevant USCIS systems of record, and assigned a primary A-number, if multiple A-numbers were identified.

- Recommendation 4: We recommend the DHS Secretary clarify DHS component responsibility for monitoring and addressing parole expiration for aliens who arrived during Operation Allies Welcome without other long-term status to ensure individuals are lawfully present in the United States after parole expiration.

DHS is dedicated to enforcing our immigration laws, to include the prompt removal of aliens who have no lawful basis for remaining in the United States. DHS also prioritizes collaboration among ICE, CBP, and USCIS to ensure that former parolees no longer authorized to remain in the United States are identified and properly addressed. ICE can already access timely and accurate data regarding former parolees who are no longer authorized to remain in the United States.

Generally, if an alien remains in the United States beyond his or her period of parole, without obtaining or applying for another lawful basis to remain in the United States, such as asylum or adjustment of status to that of a lawful permanent resident, CBP Arrival and Departure Information System will identify that alien as an in-country overstay, if in-country. CBP's Arrival and Departure Information System then shares the alien's overstay information with the CBP Automated Targeting System. CBP's Arrival and Departure Information System and ICE's LeadTrac System also share information on nonimmigrant overstay leads that are updated or are later closed. CBP's Arrival and Departure Information System does not provide overstay parole information to LeadTrac, as parolees are not nonimmigrants. For law enforcement Significant Public Benefit Paroles, ICE has a compliance program that monitors parole expiration dates.

Specific to Operation Allies Welcome, when determining whether an alien is in a period of parole, CBP, ICE, and USCIS each have the ability to access this information in real time

and have appropriate internal procedures to make decisions based on that information. In addition, Afghan nationals paroled during Operation Allies Welcome undergo recurrent vetting for the entirety of their parole period, which ensures that their biographic and biometric information is run against classified and unclassified holdings. If derogatory information is uncovered as part of recurrent vetting, DHS components coordinate with ICE and the Federal Bureau of Investigation Joint Terrorism Task Forces, as necessary, for the investigation, apprehension, detention, prosecution, and/or removal of that individual from the United States.

Moreover, as the component responsible for adjudicating Afghan re-parole requests, USCIS maintains detailed internal guidance for adjudicating officers to consider derogatory information or previous denial of an immigration benefit in the re-parole process.

- Recommendation 5: We recommend the Undersecretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans coordinate with USCIS and ICE to develop guidelines for consideration of factors such as derogatory information and prior decisions on benefit requests during the re-parole and extension of parole processes.

During FY 2024 Quarter 1, DHS was already at work coordinating with USCIS, CBP, and ICE to build consensus for developing guidelines for how derogatory information is considered during re-parole adjudications. In the Afghan re-parole context, national security concerns were chief among the types of derogatory information considered during the adjudication process. All approved Afghan nationals paroled during Operation Allies Welcome are recurrently vetted against classified and unclassified information. Should new derogatory information be found after entry, both classified and unclassified information may need to be used in immigration adjudications and proceedings.

Accordingly, DHS published the memorandum, “DHS Policy and Guidelines for the Use of Classified Information in Immigration Proceedings,” dated May 9, 2024, which details new policy and guidelines governing DHS’s use of classified information in immigration proceedings. On September 24, 2024, USCIS issued guidance regarding DHS requirements for consideration and use of classified information in USCIS adjudicative decisions. This policy provides guidance on the USCIS process for seeking originator authorization and approval of the Director or Deputy Director to use classified information as a basis for an adjudicative decision; the requirements for documenting these processes; and the requirements related to coordination with other Department components and U.S. government entities in cases that involve classified information.

In your letter, you also requested data on Afghan nationals paroled into the United States during Operation Allies Welcome. DHS provides the data below, categorized by the types of potential derogatory information held in the agency’s investigative case management system. Should you wish for more granular information, USCIS can provide that information in another forum.

Summary Table of information regarding Operation Allies Welcome A-Numbers identified as the "Primary" Entity			
Type of Potential Derogatory Information	Unique Operation Allies Welcome Parolee Record Count	Record Status: Open	Record Status: Closed
Fraud	876	89	787
Watchlisting/Interagency Referrals	31	18	13
National Security	5,005	885	4,120
Public Safety	956	16	940
Total Record Count (including status closed) = 6,868		1,008	5,860
*Note: Data as of August 12, 2025			

Total Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) Unique Parolee Enforcement and Removal Operations Administrative Arrest Stats from FY21 to FY25 YTD ²
72

Total Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) Unique Parolee ICE Initial Book-in Stats from FY21 to FY25 YTD
111

Total Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) Parolee ICE Removal Stats from FY21 to FY25 YTD
10

Total Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) Unique Parolee Detainer Stats from FY21 to FY25 YTD
63

Total Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) Parolee National Docket Stats from FY21 to FY25 YTD	
Detention Status	
Total	
Currently Detained	245
Non Detained	28
	217

² All Operation Allies Welcome FY25 YTD data is as of August 12, 2025.

From FY21 to FY25 year to date, there have been 245 Operation Allies Welcome parolees put into removal proceedings, of whom 28 are currently detained. Please refer to the table below for a breakdown of their current case status.

Total Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) Parolee By Latest Case Status Stats from FY21 to FY25 YTD	
Case Status	Total
ACTIVE	233
0-Withdrawal Permitted - I-275 Issued	3
3-Voluntary Departure Confirmed	1
8-Excluded/Removed - Inadmissibility	6
A-Proceedings Terminated	65
B-Relief Granted	29
E-Charging Document Canceled by ICE	105
L-Legalization - Permanent Residence Granted	1

As of July 28, 2025, there were approximately 580 Afghan evacuees whose parole period had expired. Among these evacuees, fewer than ten have a pending I-131 application with USCIS. USCIS has extended the initial parole or granted a new period of parole (also referred to as re-parole) for over 55,800 Operation Allies Welcome parolees as of July 28, 2025.

Thank you again for your letter. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please have your staff contact the DHS Office of Legislative Affairs at (202) 447-5890.

Sincerely,



Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security