

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0550

August 15, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

As plain as day, the crisis unfolding in Afghanistan is the complete responsibility of the Biden Administration, and the obvious result of its embarrassing failures of leadership, strategy, preparation, and planning.

On July 8, 2021, President Biden told America and the world: "But the likelihood there's going to be the Taliban overrunning everything and owning the whole country is highly unlikely." Less than one month ago, General Milley held a briefing at the Pentagon and added: "A negative outcome, a Taliban automatic takeover, is not a foregone conclusion."

Madam Speaker: It is now.

As of today, August 15, Kabul has fallen, President Ghani has fled the country, and at least 5,000 U.S. troops are being mobilized to Afghanistan. But their mission is not to restore order. It is to oversee the full-speed evacuation of American embassy staff and personnel who spent last week carrying out burn and destroy instructions in preparation for imminent takeover by the Taliban.

The dire circumstances facing Americans and allies in the path of the Taliban now necessitate that Congress step into the leadership void the White House has created.

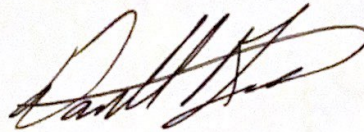
This morning's telephonic "briefing" to Congress on the deeply troubling failures unfolding in real time was little more than summary of publicly available talking points and media statements shared in several previous forms. Current administration officials also continue to place all blame on their predecessors, an embarrassing refusal to take responsibility for a series of events that this White House alone set in motion.

When Americans and our allies are under attack, leaders shouldn't stay on vacation, where the White House apparently remains as of this hour. I thus request you call on Congress to immediately return to Washington for emergency oversight briefings by Senior level Executive Branch officials.

Congress must have a full and complete accounting of the chaos unfolding and the failing response efforts now underway. We need a face-to-face dialogue and the full truth of this fiasco. Anything less is insufficient to conduct appropriate oversight and Congressional activity.

Congress must take this moment in time seriously and get back to work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darrell Issa', written in a cursive style.

DARRELL ISSA
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
House of Representatives