

U.S. Sens. Johnson, Hawley: Expose new whistleblower allegations about Biden failure to vet Afghan evacuees

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WASHINGTON – On Thursday, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), Ranking Member of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, and U.S. Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) sent a letter to Department of Defense (DoD) Acting Inspector General Sean O'Donnell calling for an immediate investigation into new DoD whistleblower allegations that the Biden Administration failed to properly vet individuals evacuated from Afghanistan.

The whistleblower alleges:

- The Biden Administration evacuated 324 individuals from Afghanistan into the United States who appeared on DoD's watchlist, which includes known suspected terrorists.
- The White House and DoD officials directed agency personnel to cut corners and not conduct full fingerprint tests of Afghan evacuees.
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) staff have been authorized to delete old biometric data, whenever they personally believe such information is out of date, which could compromise the integrity of existing databases and undermine national security.

“We write to you with concern over new allegations raised by a Department of

Defense (DoD) whistleblower. This information may show the Biden Administration's failure to vet those evacuated from Afghanistan was even worse than the public was led to believe. The following allegations demand an immediate investigation by your office," **said the Senators.**

Following Biden's failed evacuation from Afghanistan, Sen. Johnson has worked diligently to address the outstanding issues related to the disastrous withdrawal. In September 2021, Sen. Johnson [introduced](#) the *Afghanistan Counterterrorism, Oversight, and Accountability Act* and sent a [letter](#) to the Office of Management and Budget regarding miscommunications from the Biden Administration about the Afghan screening process. In December 2021, Sen. Johnson sent a [letter](#) to Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and Department of State Secretary Antony Blinken demanding information on how the agencies are vetting the Afghans and other foreign nationals brought to the U.S.

The full text of the letter can be found [here](#) or below.

August 4, 2022

Sean O'Donnell

Acting Inspector General

Department of Defense

Dear Acting Inspector General O'Donnell,

We write to you with concern over new allegations raised by a Department of

Defense (DoD) whistleblower. This information may show the Biden Administration's failure to vet those evacuated from Afghanistan was even worse than the public was led to believe. The following allegations demand an immediate investigation by your office.

You previously issued a report titled "Evaluation of the Screening of Displaced Persons from Afghanistan." Among other things, you found that "Afghan evacuees were not vetted by the National Counter-Terrorism Center (NCTC) using all DoD data prior to arriving in" the United States. In particular, we were troubled to learn that DoD "personnel identified Afghans with derogatory information in the DoD [Automated Biometric Identification System] database who were believed to be in the United States." At the time of the report, DoD "personnel had identified 50 Afghan personnel in the United States with information in DoD records that would indicate potentially significant security concerns," but we understand that number has risen to at least 65. These individuals need to be immediately located, fully vetted, and, if appropriate, deported.

A patriotic whistleblower paints an even darker picture. According to new allegations, 324 individuals evacuated from Afghanistan were allowed to enter the United States, despite appearing on the DoD's Biometrically Enabled Watchlist (BEWL). The BEWL—commonly known as "the watch list"—identifies individuals whose biometrics have been collected and determined by analysts to be threats or potential threats to national security, including known suspected terrorists (KST). This is in addition to the reportedly 65 individuals who are known to have entered the country without adequate vetting.

Furthermore, the whistleblower alleges that political appointees at the National Security Council (NSC) and DoD instructed agency personnel to cut corners when processing evacuees in Afghanistan and at staging bases in Europe, also known as "lily pads." According to the whistleblower rather than administer fingerprint tests on all ten fingers, personnel were told to abbreviate their tests in order to promote the rushed evacuation from Afghanistan.

Finally, it is alleged that personnel at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) who work on vetting Afghan evacuees have been authorized to delete old biometric data, whenever they personally believed that such information is out of date. This is a troubling development that could threaten national security and public safety.

We write to request you open an immediate investigation into these alarming allegations and specifically respond to the following:

1. How many BEWL matches were generated by biometric submissions from Afghan evacuees?
 - a. How many of these individuals were denied entry into the United States?
 - b. How many of these individuals were admitted into the United States?
 - c. How many of these individuals are currently in the United States?
2. How many BEWL matches were generated by evacuees after their arrival into the United States?
3. What steps have been taken to identify, vet, and, if appropriate, deport these BEWL matched individuals from the United States?
4. How many BEWL matches were for individuals designated as known suspected terrorists?
5. Have those who remain on the BEWL been investigated by the FBI or other

law enforcement entities?

6. Did political appointees at NSC or DoD instruct personnel to administer abbreviated fingerprint tests to Afghan evacuees? If so, were all Afghan evacuees ultimately administered 10-finger tests?

7. Under what conditions may agency personnel delete biometric information? Has any biometric information associated with Afghan evacuees been deleted?

Sincerely,