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Hon. Mr David Coleman, MP for Banks
Hon. Dr Mike Freeman, MP for Macarthur
Hon. Mr Chris Hayes, MP for Fowler
Hon. Mr Craig Kelly, MP for Hughes
Hon. Tony Burke, MP for Watson

RE: Action needed to respond to the crisis in Afghanistan.

We, the undersigned, are members of Georges River Life Church, a Baptist church with sites in Peakhurst and Chipping Norton, along with their family and friends. As you can see from the suburbs represented below, we are your constituents. As a church committed to justice and compassion, we believe that there is a moral imperative to respond to the unfolding situation in Afghanistan, and an opportunity for Australia to respond as global leaders.

As Christians we take seriously the moral obligation to care for, house, and provide for foreigners, as well as a fundamental priority to love our neighbour as ourselves. This belief demands a response to the situation being faced by our global neighbours in Afghanistan. Further, as Australians, who participated in the fighting in Afghanistan and supported the fallen regime, we have an obligation to respond to people who relied on us for safety and care.

As such, we urge the Australian government to take decisive and speedy action to address this situation. We are asking that the government would respond in the following ways:

**1. Refugee spaces to and beyond the current cap.** We note, in particular, the recent precedent set by Tony Abbott in 2015, offering 20,000 additional places for Syrian and Iraqi refugees. We can do it again today to share the responsibility of protecting Afghan lives at risk.

**2. Direct immediate financial aid toward supporting displaced people from Afghanistan,** to support programs to assist people who have been displaced across borders and, wherever possible, support organisations still offering assistance within Afghanistan.

**3. Grant all Afghan temporary visa holders permanent visas,** to provide long-term assurance of safety, as it would be highly unlikely that they have any opportunity to return home safely.

**4. Award all Afghan refugees in immigration detention at least temporary visas,** as it would seem unlikely they would be able to return home safely nor will there be opportunities to move to other nations.

This requires immediate action, and we believe that in acting we will be helping to reduce the trauma and anguish not only for the people involved but also for our nation.

We hope and pray that the government will see the urgency of this situation and act immediately.

Regards,

Rev. Scott Morrison (Senior Pastor, GRLC), Illawong

Rev. Ben Rusin (Chipping Norton Site Pastor), Chipping Norton

Mr Braddon Wheeler (Chair, GRLC Church Leadership Team), Oatley

Mrs Adna Siqueira (GRLC Church Leadership Team), Riverwood

Mrs Sarah Gray (GRLC Church Leadership Team), Englorie Park

Rev. Malcolm Campbell (Discipleship Pastor, GRLC), Wattle Grove

Rev. Sophie Brodie (GRLC Children and Families Pastor), Padstow Heights

Mrs Jasmine Round (GRLC Youth Pastor), Padstow

Mr Glenn Power (Pastor, Church & Community Care), Allawah

Mrs Lara Watson (Equip Pastor, GRLC), Oatley

Mrs Jodie Morrison, Illawong

Mrs Alison Rusin, Chipping Norton

Ms Taryn Pascoe, Illawong

Mr Marbuen Diaz, Padstow

Mr Matthew Gray, Englorie Park

Mrs Kerrie Campbell, Wattle Grove

Mr Andrei Mocanu, Panania

Mrs Karen Power (GRLC Digital Media Manager), Moorebank

Mrs Lorena Fazio, Belfield

Ms Elyse Mascera, Belfield

Mrs Ellen Tyrrell (Children’s ministry team leader), Rosemeadow

Mrs Katharine Montoya, Lugarno

Mrs Suzanne Sharp, Oatley

Kathryn Van Dyke, Lugarno

Mr Joshua Round, Padstow