



16 June 2019

Statement on *No One Left Behind* by General David Petraeus (US Army, Ret.)

No One Left Behind helps our country fulfill a moral obligation to Afghan and Iraqi translators who faithfully served alongside our military in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. These individuals provided enormous assistance to our forces as they carried out their duties alongside our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines. But, because of the assistance they provided to U.S. forces, many of them and their families are now targeted by the Taliban, the Islamic State, and other extremist and insurgent groups.

No One Left Behind (NOLB) was formed in 2013 to help these battlefield comrades and their families navigate the SIV process, and to then welcome them to the United States by helping them resettle in major cities across the country. NOLB provides for furniture, transportation, employment guidance, English education, help with medical care, emergency financial assistance, and supportive communities of U.S. Veterans and volunteers united in helping our allies become self-sufficient and embark on a path to achieve the American Dream.

SIVs occupy a unique space, being both refugees from and, in a sense, “veterans” of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. They often experience many of the same challenges that U.S. Veterans encounter; however, they cannot go the Department of Veterans Affairs for assistance. NOLB helps fill this gap.

Both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama have recognized No One Left Behind’s efforts. And because of NOLB’s proven track record, the U.S. State Department formally requested NOLB’s help in establishing resettlement operations in an area of the country that had no support structure for SIVs.

NOLB has also helped to inform policy makers and the media on the needs of those seeking and using SIVs. Bipartisan efforts on Capitol Hill have resulted in several pieces of legislation that have appropriated funds for over 20,000 visas since 2013. NOLB will continue to be both a voice and part of the support system for those using SIVs here and abroad, but NOLB’s volunteers need additional help.

It is a privilege for me to stand with No One Left Behind - and to encourage others to do likewise as we seek to discharge a moral obligation to the Afghan and Iraqi heroes to whom we and those who have worn our country’s uniform in Afghanistan and Iraq owe so much.

Sincerely,

David H. Petraeus
General, United States Army (Retired)
Member, No One Left Behind Advisory Board