

Immigration Action Team

Report for June 2023 Board Meeting

During the past two months, the UUSJ Immigration Action Team (IAT) has been very active.

The IAT, working with the DAT, completed an on-demand program entitled “Faithfully Becoming UU Federal Advocates for Justice” for this year’s General Assembly in Pittsburgh. The two teams received a great deal of technical assistance from Rev. Peggy Clarke and Starling Carter, media coordinator, of the Community Church of New York Unitarian Universalist. The on-demand program describes UUSJ’s advocacy activities, highlights how our two teams engage with Congress and the Executive Branch, and describes how UU individuals and congregations can join in.

In May, the IAT helped develop two **Action Alerts** that went to UUSJ members and friends. One to [Defend Asylum](#) and one to ask Congress to [Reintroduce the Afghan Adjustment Act](#).

The IAT continued its work to support the Afghanistan Adjustment Act and the Afghan Allies Protection Act.

Afghanistan Adjustment Act narrowly missed passage in the last session of Congress. This Act would provide an opportunity for the 76,400 people whom we evacuated to the U.S. in August 2021 an opportunity to apply for permanent residency (pending a robust security vetting). It will also increase the categories of people eligible for Special Immigrant Visas (SIV), provide additional consular support to assist those applying for SIVs, and establish an InterAgency Task Force to coordinate the efforts of the US Government in aiding additional evacuation of those left behind.

Afghan Allies Protection Act (AAPA), which was introduced in the Senate and the House as H.R.3808 and S.1786 which would amend the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009 to authorize additional special immigrant visas, to require a strategy for efficient processing, and to establish designated senior special immigrant visa coordinating officials.

UUSJ met with several key House Republicans, the critical players in this Congress, to raise our principled concerns. Meetings were held with Representatives Issa (CA-48), Wenstrup (OH-2), Joyce (OH-14), Roy (TX-21), Crenshaw (TX-02), and Mike Turner (OH-10).

During the week of June 12, IAT members are participating with Evacuate Our Allies in an Action Week meeting with members of Congress to support the AAA and the AAPA. IAT members are leading Action Week Congressional meetings with constituents in several states, including Michigan, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

The IAT also met with the Executive Director of the Value Our Families and decided to participate in their Week of Action featuring emails to and meetings with Congressional offices about reintroducing the Reuniting Families Act (RFA).