



On One Year Anniversary Of Abduction, Duckworth And Durbin Urge Biden Administration To Prioritize Illinoisan's Safe Return From Afghanistan

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WASHINGTON— One year after Illinoisan Mark Frerichs was abducted by the Taliban, Haqqani network or their affiliates in Kabul, U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), a member of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) who served in the Reserve Forces for 23 years, and U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), Vice Chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, wrote letters to President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken requesting that the administration prioritizes bringing Mark, and other American hostages like him, home safely.

In their [letter](#) to Biden, the Senators wrote: “As questions linger regarding the future of American forces in Afghanistan after the previous administration’s hasty and reckless drawdowns, we are increasingly concerned that we may be losing our leverage to ensure American hostages in Afghanistan and Pakistan, including Mark Frerichs, are safely returned home to their families. Further troop withdrawals that are not conditioned upon the release of American hostages will likely make it harder to subsequently secure their release. We urge you to examine this case and ensure that the release of Mark Frerichs and other American hostages be prioritized in future negotiations with the Taliban and that any further troop reductions be conditioned upon their safe return.”

When [writing](#) to Blinken, Duckworth and Durbin requested a briefing on the latest developments in the Frerichs case and stated, “we appreciate any clarity you can provide on the diplomatic options that remain for Mr. Frerichs’ return and how they factor into decisions regarding the future of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan.”

In November, Duckworth [wrote letters](#) to the previous administration urging it to take immediate action to secure the safe return of Mark Frerichs and hostages like him in Afghanistan. She [released a statement](#) criticizing the Trump Administration's decision to hastily withdraw troops from Afghanistan and Iraq without concessions, during negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban. Durbin also [condemned](#) the Trump Administration's decision to draw down troop levels in Afghanistan and Iraq.