Dear [name of your MP],

I am writing to you as a constituent after watching the harrowing images from Afghanistan where people are being forced to flee from the Taliban. I am asking that you take a stand for the Afghan people who have been suddenly and violently displaced from their homes.

The situation in Afghanistan is a stark reminder that all too often people don’t choose to leave their homes. They are forced to flee, taking no more than they can carry, running towards safety, wherever they might find it. If other countries shut their borders, there would be nowhere for desperate people to go.

This is what the UK is proposing to do with the Nationality and Borders Bill, which is returning to Parliament later this year. This anti-refugee Bill aims to criminalise people travelling to safety via so-called 'irregular routes' — often the only routes available to people forced to flee for their lives, like many of those desperately seeking safety in Afghanistan. It says we should prioritise giving protection to those who wait patiently for resettlement places to become available but doesn’t make any commitments to creating those safe and legal pathways.

I believe that the UK cannot call on other countries to play their part in addressing the situation in Afghanistan until we are confident that we have stepped up to the task. I am asking that you speak out on my behalf, calling for:

● A long-term commitment to a global resettlement scheme with an ambitious target that can adapt and respond to crises that unfold around the globe;

* Country guidance for Afghanistan, which guides Home Office decision-making on asylum applications, to be updated to reflect the new context;
* Rapid resolution of pending Afghan asylum claims and rapid review of Afghan asylum appeals, so that people are able to start rebuilding their lives in the UK;
* Family reunion rules to be reviewed to allow for a broader range of family members to join those from Afghanistan who have settled in the UK.

Finally, and crucially, the Nationality and Borders Bill, which will make it even harder for those fleeing oppression to seek safety, needs to be radically altered. It is unthinkable that in a few months’ time, some Afghan refugees will reach our shores after a perilous journey to the UK because of a lack of safe routes to get here. Under the Bill, they will be criminalised, their claims treated as inadmissible, and returned to one of the countries they have travelled through.

We have a proud record of helping those fleeing persecution, oppression or tyranny from around the world. Now, more than ever, we need to step up and provide urgent protection to Afghans fleeing for their lives.

Please feel free to get in touch with me to discuss in more detail. I look forward to hearing from you.

[Signed]