

AMY KLOBUCHAR
MINNESOTA

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RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

I write to urge the Department to expedite the safe return of American citizens stranded abroad as a result of travel restrictions from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

An increasing number of countries around the world are implementing significant travel restrictions and border closures to limit the spread of the virus, sometimes with little to no warning. As a result, American citizens have found themselves stuck after their commercial flights and other forms of transportation have been cancelled.

Currently, my office is in communication with U.S. citizens from Minnesota stranded in eleven different countries, across five continents. With so many of our citizens in need of immediate assistance, I urge you to coordinate with commercial airlines, foreign governments, and other federal agencies to develop plans to safely return them to the U.S. as soon as possible. The Department should consider all options in doing this, including charter flights, utilization of the Civil Reserve Air Fleet readiness program, and arranging for waivers for commercial airlines to operate a limited number of flights to meet the demand of returning Americans.

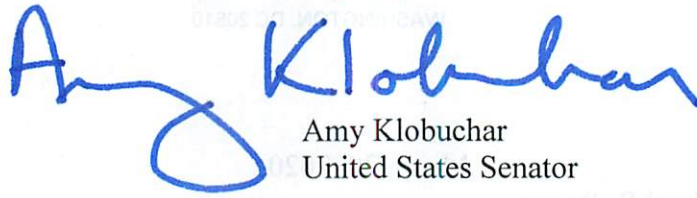
Additionally, if any Americans stranded in foreign countries face expiration of their visas prior to departure from the country, I ask that you work with the host country to take the necessary steps to allow them to legally remain in the country until their departure.

I also urge the Department, working through our U.S. embassies abroad, to provide detailed and consistent communications to citizens stranded abroad. Many of our fellow Americans are facing uncertainty during this challenging time, and it is critical that they know that their government is working hard to assist them.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created significant challenges for coordinating transportation. Now that the State Department has declared a level four travel advisory, it is more important than ever to take quick action to return Americans stranded abroad home.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

AMERICAN OVERSIGHT
COMMITTEE
ON THE
TRANSPARENCY
IN GOVERNMENT
ACTIVITY

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Secretary of State
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Dear Secretary Pompeo,

I write to urge the Department to expedite the safe return of American citizens stranded abroad as a result of travel restrictions from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The increasing number of cases around the world are inflicting significant travel restrictions and border closures that limit the ability of the virus, sometimes with little warning. As a result, American citizens have found themselves stuck after their commercial flights and other forms of transport have been cancelled.

My office is in communication with U.S. citizens from Minnesota stranded in eleven different countries across five continents. As many of our citizens are used to immediate assistance, I urge you to coordinate with our embassies, foreign governments, and other federal agencies to develop plans to safely return them to the U.S. as soon as possible. The Department should consider all options in this regard, including charter flights. The location of the U.S. Embassy's Air-First readiness program and arranging for waivers for commercial airlines to create a limited number of flights to meet the demand of returning Americans.

Additionally, if any Americans are in a foreign country in a region considered a zone of high risk for departure from the country, I urge you to work with the host country to take the necessary steps to allow them to legally remain in that country until their departure.

The logistic Department working through U.S. embassies abroad to provide detailed and consistent communications to citizens abroad. Many of our fellow Americans are facing uncertainty during this challenging time, and it is critical that they know that their government is working hard to assist them.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created significant challenges for coordinating transport from abroad that the State Department has issued travel advisory. It is more important than ever to take quick action to return Americans stranded abroad home.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.