

Coffman Wants Investigation into Afghan Corruption
Requests Congressional Investigation into Missing U.S. Medical Aid and Patient Abuse

(WASHINGTON) - Today, U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO) sent a letter to the House Armed Services Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Rob Wittman (R-VA) formally requesting a Congressional investigation into a series of allegations made in recent media reports. These allegations detail corruption within the Afghan government involving up to \$42 million in U.S. donated medicines and pharmaceutical supplies meant for the soldiers and police of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) that have been disappearing before ever reaching Afghan military hospitals and clinics. In addition, Coffman wants the investigation to focus on allegations stemming from recent media reports concerning corrupt practices related to the care ANSF members received at the Dawood National Military Hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan. These recent news reports have also documented that ANSF soldiers and police have died from untreated wounds and malnutrition because their families could not come up with the bribes required by attending ANSF hospital personnel.

“Nothing speaks more about corruption in Afghanistan than allegations that U.S. donated medical supplies are either sold for profit by Afghan officials or withheld from wounded soldiers and police officers until their families first come up with the bribes demanded by hospital personnel,” said Coffman.

Coffman wants the Congressional investigation that he is requesting to determine if the allegations are factual, how did these incidents occur given the ongoing responsibilities of U.S. and Afghan officials to track U.S. military aid, and if these allegations are found to be true, what actions were taken by U.S. military and ANSF upon learning of these corrupt practices.

“How can we ask these young Afghan soldiers and policeman to sacrifice so much for the security of their country when the very government they are fighting for is so corrupt?” said Coffman.

[Click here](#) to view a PDF of the letter, or see below:

Dear Chairman Wittman:

I am deeply concerned about allegations of widespread corruption involving U.S. military aid and the mistreatment of patients at the Dawood National Military Hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan. Recent media reports have outlined the actions of corrupt Afghan government officials, including allegations that up to \$42 million in U.S. medical aid supplies is unaccounted for and never reached the Afghan military's clinics and hospitals. Additionally, the U.S.-funded central Afghan military hospital in Kabul allegedly allowed patients to die of malnourishment and untreated wounds if they failed to pay the bribes demanded by the hospital's staff. Staff members at the hospital are accused of selling U.S. taxpayer-funded medical supplies intended for their patients.

U.S. military advisors attached to the Afghan National Army's medical corps report that up to \$42 million in U.S.-donated medical supplies failed to reach the Afghan military clinics they were intended for in 2010. Once the supplies were turned over to the Afghan government, U.S. forces were unable to account for them, but suggested that it was likely Afghan officials sold the medical supplies rather than use them for their intended purpose. This corruption is not limited to U.S.-donated medical supplies; the central Afghan military hospital also appears to be rife with graft and abuse.

The Dawood National Military Hospital – tasked to treat injured members of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) – is heavily supported by the U.S. government. The majority of the hospital's supplies and staff salaries are funded by U.S. taxpayers. Members of the hospital's staff are alleged to have sold medical supplies for personal profit, extorted bribes from patients and patients' families, and allowed many patients to die from preventable causes such as malnourishment and improper hygiene. These violations of basic human rights, coupled with rampant corruption, are an outrage. I believe that congressional oversight is necessary to put an end to the deplorable conditions at the hospital and root out the endemic corruption there.

During this time when Congress has to cut back on domestic priorities due to budget constraints, it is inconceivable that U.S. taxpayer dollars were embezzled by members of the hospital's administration while they willfully neglected injured Afghan soldiers and police personnel. The brave men and women of our armed forces are working hard to transition operational control in Afghanistan to the ANSF by 2014. Massive corruption in the Afghan government, as evident in these two instances, jeopardizes this entire strategy.

I look forward to working with you and the rest of the Subcommittee to establish a plan of action that will confirm the extent of the willful abuse of patients at the hospital, hold corrupt individuals accountable, and make sure that the appropriate actions are taken to stop the waste of U.S. taxpayer dollars.

Sincerely,

Mike Coffman
Member of Congress

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