

PRESS BRIEFING AUGUST 3, 2005 10 A.M.

July 26, 2005

Dear Colleague:

During the past six months, our organizations have been documenting increased patterns of discrimination against Iranian Americans. Specifically, we hear that members of the Iranian American community have been subjected to:

- Employment discrimination
- No Fly lists, Watch lists, and Selectee lists
- FBI interrogation and surveillance
- Security clearance denials
- Immigration discrimination

While we are mindful of security concerns, we unequivocally oppose targeting of Iranian Americans on the basis of ethnic origin. Such biases do nothing to increase safety and security. Almost four years after the tragedy of September 11th, another tragedy continues to develop—the unjust targeting of the Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian communities—which threatens to divide us as a nation. As a result of our concerns, for the first time, our organizations have joined together to reach out to the Iranian American community to educate individuals about their rights.

On June 2, 2005, the *Iranian American Know Your Rights* campaign was launched in Los Angeles through a press briefing at the offices of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California. Due to the success of the launch, we are bringing the campaign to Northern California to continue our efforts to educate the Iranian American community and the American community at large of the threat of discrimination and resources available to prevent such discrimination.

On **August 3, 2005 at 10a.m.**, we would like to invite you to the National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement office at 444 De Haro St., Ste. 205, San Francisco, for a **breakfast briefing** as we continue the *Iranian American Know Your Rights* campaign. The focus of the briefing will be twofold: we will expose stories of discrimination documented by our organizations and introduce legal rights education for this targeted community.

We hope you can join us on this date. Please RSVP to Meghann Boyle at 415-553-7100 or akhlaghilaw@sbcglobal.net.

Sincerely,

The Iranian American Know Your Rights Coalition

Banafsheh Akhlaghi, President
National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement

Dalia Hashad, Arab, Muslim, and South Asian Advocate
American Civil Liberties Union

Dorothy Ehrlich, Executive Director
Mark Schlosberg, Police Practices Policy Director
American Civil Liberties Union, Northern California

Erin Callahan, Western Regional Director
Amnesty International

Joan Ehrlich, District Director
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, San Francisco

Maryam Ahsanjani, Board of Directors
Michael Farhang, Board of Directors
Iranian American Bar Association

Morad Ghorban, Political Director
Taeiss Mojazza, Board of Directors
Iranian American Political Action Committee

Samer Rabadi, Deputy Director, Western Region
Amnesty International