



NATIONAL IRANIAN AMERICAN COUNCIL
*Promoting Iranian-American Participation at
All Levels of American Civic Life*
www.niacouncil.org

FACT SHEET

Congressional Breakfast Series

*Influence starts at the individual level. How can Iranian Americans befriend their representatives, express their support, convey their concerns and help educate decision-makers on the interests and viewpoints of their community? **The answer is NIAC's Congressional Breakfast Series.***

- NIAC's Congressional Breakfast Series allows members of the Iranian-American community to host meetings with their respective lawmakers to discuss issues of interest and establish long-term and mutually sustainable relationships between themselves and members of Congress.
- NIAC organizes these meetings on behalf of the Iranian American community as individuals may not have the time, know the best route of action or feel comfortable making the initial contact with their lawmakers. As a non-political non-partisan organization, NIAC serves as the facilitator of these meetings by building the initial bridge between the Iranian-American community and the respective lawmakers.
- The Congressional Breakfast Series are designed to allow participants to initiate and take the lead on the agendas of their meetings with members of Congress, deciding what issues to raise, what positions to take and what questions to ask, while remaining in complete control of the discussions throughout.
- After the meetings, NIAC encourages participants to follow-up with their congressman to raise other important issues, and remain in contact with their elected official on a regular basis.
- Positioning the Iranian-American community to be the first immigrant community to benefit from this grass-roots civic education service, NIAC has held three successful Congressional Breakfasts in the past six months, including meetings with Congressmen Frank Wolf and James Moran of Virginia, and Congressman Chris Van Hollen of Maryland. Topics of discussion have ranged from health care, housing and transportation to legislation, elections and U.S. foreign policy.
- Iranian Americans have left these meetings with a sense of empowerment. As noted by one member:

"NIAC helped me overcome my self-imposed barriers in contacting my Congressman. Thanks to NIAC, I have found a receptive Congressman that I can educate about my concerns and the concerns of Iranian Americans."

-Dr. Farrokh Alemi
Assistant Dean for Graduate Health Science
George Mason University