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## **IRANIAN-AMERICAN ORGS FILE FEDERAL LAWSUIT AGAINST TRUMP TRAVEL BAN EXECUTIVE ORDER**

### **Joint Statement of the Pars Equality Center, the Iranian American Bar Association, the National Iranian American Council, and the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans**

Washington, DC—Today, several prominent Iranian-American organizations filed a joint action in federal court to stop the Trump Administration’s Executive Order restricting travel to and from the United States and Iran and six other predominantly Muslim nations. The lawsuit was filed by Iranian American civil rights lawyer Cyrus Mehri, partner of Washington, DC-based firm Mehri & Skalet, PLLC; the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; and pro bono counsel, Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer (“APKS”), on behalf of the Pars Equality Center, the Iranian American Bar Association, the National Iranian American Council, and the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans.

The Iranian-American community has been significantly and adversely impacted by the travel ban. Iran had the largest total number of legal entrants into the U.S. (310,182) between 2006 and 2015; two-thirds of those entrants arrived in the United States on temporary visas. Of the 90,000 visa holders potentially impacted from the seven countries singled out by the EO, almost half (42,542) are from Iran alone.

The Iranian-American organizations released the following joint statement:

“In a united effort, and in honor of our parents, children and the entire Iranian-American community, we have filed a joint action in federal court to stop the White House’s Executive Order, a wholly irrational directive that profoundly discriminates against our community simply due to our national origin.

“The Executive Order cruelly, illogically categorizes everyone of Iranian descent as a potential terrorist, despite the fact that, according to the Cato Institute, no one of Iranian descent has been involved in the horrific and fatal acts of terror committed on U.S. soil. Iranians were not among the perpetrators of 9/11 or the Oklahoma City bombings or the nightclub killings in Orlando, Florida, or any of the other acts of terror that have taken place in the United States. To the contrary, Iranian Americans were counted among the victims in San Bernardino, as well as among the first responders on the scene.

“Iranian Americans prove every day that we are patriotic and fully support our national security concerns. We serve on the front lines of our national defense, whether on the battlefield, in government, or as technology-providers and first responders. We have held high-level public service posts in all branches of the United States Armed Services and in the military academies.

“Today, with this joint action, we show our strong opposition to the blanket ban on Iranian nationals to the U.S., which will not make us safer, and would not have prevented acts of terrorism. We agree with now-Vice President Mike Pence’s statement in December 2015 that, *‘Calls to ban Muslims from entering the U.S. are offensive and unconstitutional.’*”

“Under American immigration laws there can be no discrimination based on national origin. The United States Constitution provides for Due Process, Equal Protection and the First Amendment/Establishment Clause. We filed the suit today in federal court to uphold not only the best of our community of Iranian Americans, but also to uphold the best of American principles that motivated our families to make enormous sacrifices to join a nation that stands for freedom and equal opportunity free from discrimination.

“We deeply thank the attorneys at Mehri & Skalet, the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and APKS for tirelessly working around the clock to develop and file this action.”

To learn more or to sign up to receive email updates about the case, visit [www.EndtheTravelBan.com](http://www.EndtheTravelBan.com). To provide information in support of the lawsuit, email [endthetravelban@findjustice.com](mailto:endthetravelban@findjustice.com).

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