

Contact: Christy Setzer, christy@newheightscommunications.com or
Aurora Matthews, aurora@newheightscommunications.com, 301-221-7984
March 15, 2017

IRANIAN-AMERICAN ORGS FILE FEDERAL COURT CHALLENGE TO TRUMP TRAVEL BAN 2.0

Complaint Outlines Devastating Impact of Travel Ban on Iranian-American Families

Washington, DC—Four prominent Iranian-American organizations renewed their challenge to the Trump Administration’s illegal and unconstitutional policies, filing papers to take on the President’s revised “Travel Ban” Executive Order. The organizations, joined by over 20 individual plaintiffs, have updated their existing lawsuit against the January 27th Travel Ban Executive Order, *Pars Equality, et al v. Trump*, to take on the March 6th version.

“From separating families to disrupting the education of college and law students to harming our small businesses, the Trump Administration’s revised travel ban creates irreparable harm for Iranian-American families,” said Cyrus Mehri, Iranian-American civil rights lawyer and founding partner of Washington, DC-based firm Mehri & Skalet, PLLC, who represents the plaintiffs. “We hope our lawsuit shows that the capricious nature of the Travel Ban and its destructive impact on the Iranian-American community undercuts democracy at home and abroad and makes America less safe.”

The plaintiffs-- Pars Equality Center, Iranian American Bar Association, National Iranian American Council, and Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans-- have amended their February 8th complaint and asked the District of Columbia federal court to enjoin the Trump Administration’s March 6 Executive Order restricting travel to and from the United States and Iran and five other predominantly Muslim nations. The latest filing includes approximately 25 declarations, which provide a unique and compelling factual record on the ongoing harm to the Iranian-American community as a result of this discriminatory policy since its enactment on January 27th.

The declarations which will be filed today show how the Trump Travel Bans have caused irreparable injury to the Iranian-American community continuously from January 27 to date through actions including:

Wreaking havoc on Iranian American families: The declarations include accounts of wedding plans being disrupted, of families being forced to disconnect from each other, and medical conditions worsened by the Travel Ban.

Disrupting the Academic, Research and Student Communities: The declarations highlight disruption to college, graduate and law students of Iranian descent - which not only stymie their own education but erode their academic, research and other contributions to U.S. universities.

Weakening U.S. Businesses and U.S. Economy: The Iranian-American community has contributed mightily to U.S. businesses, technology and innovation. The declarations provide examples of immediate harm to U.S. business interests and individuals of Iranian descent who have strengthened the U.S. economy but are now sidetracked by the Travel Bans.

Harm to Refugees: The declarations show examples of harm to refugee applicants seeking safety for themselves and their families.

Harm to U.S. Democracy: The capricious nature of the Travel Ban and its destructive impact on the Iranian-American community undercuts democracy at home and abroad and makes America less safe.

The declarations bring to life the discrimination and hurtful stigma caused by the Travel Bans. The relief sought in *Pars Equality* goes beyond the preliminary injunction achieved by Washington State.

In addition to Mehri, *Pars Equality* is prosecuted by the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and pro bono counsel, Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer (“APKS”).

The Iranian-American community has been significantly and adversely impacted by the travel ban. Among the six nations singled out 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.

To learn more about the lawsuit or to add your name, visit endthetavelban.com.

#