



## **ISSUE BRIEF:** **Immigration Reform, Civil Liberties, and National Security**

### Discussion Points:

Arab Americans are immigrants and the descendants of immigrants who celebrate more than 100 years as an American community. A diverse people numbering more than three million, we trace our heritage to more than 20 Arab countries. Our issues are defined by the successes enjoyed by our community in this country, as well as the challenges. In recent years, Arab Americans have been unfairly targeted by a number of national security initiatives, many of which are executed through an already overburdened and inefficient immigration system.

AAI supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes necessary revisions to post-9/11 policies affecting Arab American and Muslim immigrant communities. Federal, state and local officials working to protect America must demonstrate their commitment to fully respect the constitutional rights guaranteed to all persons residing in the United States and revise or repeal any statute that allows for the violation of these rights in the name of national security.

### Recommendations:

In order to ensure policies that make our country strong and secure while protecting the civil liberties enshrined in the Constitution, AAI endorses immigration reform that is comprehensive and includes:

- Termination of the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) with guarantees that those who did not register, or did not register properly, under NSEERS will no longer be denied immigration benefits if otherwise eligible.
- Elimination of programs and policies that allow for increased domestic surveillance, selective law enforcement, intrusive actions by immigration and border officials, excessive powers of search and seizure, and enhanced information dissemination between federal, state and local law enforcement.
- Congressional review of controversial counterterrorism legislation, especially existing directives on racial profiling and the revised DoJ guidelines governing domestic investigations.