

Goal II: To cultivate a broad and deep base of American Muslims who can effectively formulate and advise local, state, regional and national political leaders on policy issues of concern to their local communities.

- A. **Objective 1:** *Develop a strong network of American Muslim political organizations working with local, state and national political leaders.*

During the first half of 2002 the Governmental Affairs Department consulted more regularly with chapters about local lobbying. We provided regular analysis and information about pending legislation, suggestions on how to address specific issues in meeting with representatives, and strategy for dealing with local congressional offices. The Governmental Affairs Department initiated a 'nation-wide lobby day', encouraging chapters to meet with their representatives during a particular week to talk about a single issue using the same talking points. We hope that we can make this a regular, perhaps monthly event, and engage the chapters in a process of jointly deciding what issues to tackle in the coming month. We also initiated the regular use of our Capitol Advantage site, which allows individuals to access action alerts and other tools that help them to regularly contact their representatives and other government officials learn about important legislation and increase the volume of the community's correspondence with Congress and the Administration. CAIR has sent over 20,800 messages through this system alone. We also continued to communicate with the Democratic National Committee about ways to get Muslims involved in the political system through participation in election campaigns and other party activities, like training.

- B. **Objective 2:** Establish the CAIR governmental affairs department to provide sophisticated, principled policy positions in a form that is accessible to non-specialists.

The Governmental Affairs department has begun to develop and issue independent analysis of new legislation, policies and executive orders. Governmental Affairs usually can develop talking points on important development and distribute them to CAIR staff through the Shura list in a matter of days. During this time I also participated in a number of interviews and public speaking engagements as a representative of CAIR. I was regularly quoted in major newspapers, conducted nationally syndicated radio interviews and appeared on FoxNews shows, including Hannity and Colmes.

Governmental Affairs is now plugged into a number of coalitions and networks through which we receive rapid analysis of issues and developments, which helps us to keep staff better informed about the significance of new policy or legislative initiatives and various organizations' legislative actions. CAIR has also developed a legislative agenda to help staff and supporters better understand our legislative priorities and chart a map for when and where CAIR can act on legislative and policy issues.

IV. Assessment

- A. **General:** The Governmental Affairs department has increased its capacity to understand and deal with new government policies and legislation, analyze this new information, initiate CAIR action or coordinate its lobbying efforts with other organizations. Greater familiarity with CAIR's working environment, the legislative process and lobbying tools and strategies helped make the Governmental Affairs department more effective. Through increased meetings with congressional offices we have become a more familiar player with some congressional staff. We are now regular participants in most major organizational meetings on civil rights issues; our absence from meetings or failure to sign on to joint letters is clearly noticed, and our