

January 7, 2020

Dear Neighborhood House,

I was shocked and saddened to learn about the events that occurred at the US-Canada border over the weekend, in Blaine, Washington. Many Iranians and Iranian-Americans were detained by US Customs and Border Protection for prolonged questioning as they were looking to cross the border to return to their homes in the US. Civil rights organizations are investigating this and assisting those who were affected, including local partners such as the Northwest Immigrants Rights Project (NWIRP) and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

These actions have been condemned by our governor, Jay Inslee, as well as many other elected officials across our state and country. Neighborhood House joins them in condemning this behavior by the US Customs and Border Protection, and we stand with our community members here in King County and all over the nation who may be experiencing threats.

Neighborhood House has served our immigrant and refugee communities for 114 years. We have often been the first warm hand to reach across national, cultural, religious, and linguistic differences to say "All are welcome. How can we help?" This tradition continues today and we are proud to serve individuals from dozens of backgrounds, including many clients from the cultures, peoples, and languages of Iran and the entire region. We stand proudly with these communities, our staff, and our partners to reject the actions at the border this weekend and continue our work to build Strong Families and Strong Communities.

Below are links to resources from the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

<https://www.cair.com/KnowYourRights>

https://www.cair.com/breaking_cair_wa_assisting_iranian_americans_detained_u_s_border

Janice Deguchi (*she/her/hers*)
Executive Director | Neighborhood House
1225 S. Weller Street, Suite 510
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 461-8430 ext. 2092
www.nhwa.org

