FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Political Action Committee?
Political Action Committees (PACs) are an organized way for individuals to make donations to political candidates.

A “connected PAC” raises money from people employed by a corporation or trade union, or members of a membership organization or trade association. Unconnected” or “Independent” PACs —such as the Arab American Leadership Council PAC (ALC PAC)— raise money from the general public.

Why should I donate to the PAC instead of directly to a candidate?
It’s not an either/or. You can donate to a specific candidate and to a PAC. Your donation to a candidate shows your support for his/her agenda. Your donation to a PAC shows your support for the goals and agenda put forth by that organization or the constituency it represents. The strength of the ALC PAC demonstrates to candidates the political engagement of the Arab American community, and draws greater attention to our collective interests and concerns.

How much can I donate?
Individuals may donate up to $5,000 per year to a PAC. Married couples can donate $5,000 each to a PAC. The ALC PAC accepts contributions from $10 - $5,000.

How much can my company donate?
By federal law, PACs cannot accept corporate donations, or donations drawn on a corporate account. Only contributions from personal accounts can be accepted.

Can I charge my contribution?
Yes, ALC PAC accepts VISA and MasterCard. Please be sure that the card being used is a personal, not a corporate, card.

When was the ALC PAC established?
The Arab American Leadership Council (ALC) was founded in 1989 as a national network to monitor and support the activity of elected and appointed officials, candidates for public office, and party activists of Arab descent. In 1996 the Arab American Leadership PAC was formed to support candidates for federal office. In 2002, the AALPAC merged with the ALC and was renamed the ALC PAC.
Does the ALC PAC contribute to Democratic or to Republican candidates?
The ALC PAC contributes to the campaigns of qualified candidates who support the Arab American community, work on our issues, and address our concerns—regardless of party affiliation.

How does the ALC PAC determine which candidates receive contributions?
Priority is given to candidates of Arab descent, congressional candidates with strong support in the Arab American community and congressional incumbents who have strong ties to our ethnic constituency or policy concerns.

Does ALC PAC contribute to state and federal campaigns?
Where states laws permit, the ALC PAC can contribute to candidates at the local and state level (mostly Arab American) and federal campaigns.

Does ALC PAC contribute to Presidential campaigns?
Because of the large pool of congressional candidates and growing number of Arab American campaigns at all levels, the PAC’s resources are not geared toward presidential campaigns, but in the 2008 election cycle, donations have been made to allow board members to attend events for presidential primary candidates.

Can I direct my contribution to a particular candidate?
No, all contributions are pooled in a central fund, which is distributed based on the vote of the ALC PAC Board. We do welcome the input of our supporters, and will consider all donor recommendations during deliberation.

How much money does the ALC PAC donate annually?
Most federal PACs have a 2-year election cycle (e.g., 2009-2010) and the majority of contributions are made in years when federal elections take place. The ALPAC's total distributions during an election cycle depends on the amount raised, ranging from as little as $2,500 to more than $100,000. On average, 95% of all contributions to the ALC PAC go back out as donations to campaigns.

Does the ALC PAC have a Board and staff?
The ALC PAC is governed by a Treasurer, who is legally responsible for the activities of the ALC PAC, and a volunteer board made up of those who donate $5,000 to the ALC PAC per election cycle. Dr. James J. Zogby has served as the Treasurer of the ALC PAC since its inception. The ALC PAC does not employ staff; all work is done by volunteers.

How can I get a list of candidates the ALC PAC has supported?
This information is available on the FEC website (www.fec.gov) or you may contact us at info@aaleadershipcouncil.org or call 202-429-9210 to request a report of past PAC recipients.

Please, help us support those candidates who understand and address our community’s concerns. Make your donation to the ALC PAC today.