PRESENTATION DELIVERED Friday, September 26, 2008 ON CANDIDATE NIGHTS AT THE RAMALLAH CLUB SPONSORED BY THE ARAB AMERICAN INSTITUTE

As the former President of the State of Florida Women’s Political Caucus and as an Arab American Woman, I take great honor in being here tonight.

According to our newspaper, the Florida Times Union, the number of people in Florida of Arab heritage is nearly 400,000. Our city of Jacksonville is often reported as among those cities with the highest concentration of Arab Americans in the nation.

We as Arab Americans tend to split our vote fairly evenly between the Republican and Democratic Parties. Thus we are also split between conservatives and liberals.

And of course, 52.3 per cent of us are Women.

For just a few moments, 3 minutes to be exact, I have been asked by Maram our host from the Arab American Institute to share with you a little about our women—our Arab American Women in politics.

When my mother, Sadie Daumit Saffy was born, she did not have the right to vote. For you see, eighty-eight years ago all women in this country were denied the right to vote by the constitution of the United States. However, in 1920 the constitution was amended and of course, we Women have the right to vote and with that right and with that vote we too can change history.

With the men, we women have accomplished some really important things.
We of course always have assisted the men with being elected to public office; yet, now we ourselves have moved into the political world and we too have been both elected and appointed to high office.

Let us look at a very few of these Women of Arab heritage who have changed our political world.

First a governor... The governor of New Hampshire, Governor Janine Shaheen. Being governor wasn't enough for her. She has decided to seek the office of United States Senator. In November, the people of New Hampshire will have the opportunity to vote for Janine Shaheen for U.S. Senator.

Another governor... Well not the governor, but the power behind the throne. Governor Bob Graham is the husband of an Arab American Woman, Adele Graham. Many in this room have met her. Without Adele's knowledge, skill, and wisdom, would Bob Graham have been elected first our Governor and then our United States Senator?

On the national level again...Florida's own Donna Shalala was appointed Secretary of Health and Human Services by President Bill Clinton.

You will know the name of this next Florida Arab American Woman when I tell you the name of the office she held.

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Florida. Of course, ROSEMARY BARKETT.

Two more...Our own Jacksonville Women. Ginger Soud our former City Council Woman.
And with the greatest of honor... The first woman to be Jacksonville’s State Attorney, the daughter of Lorraine and Tom Corey, our own
ANGELA COREY.

So here we are tonight. Proud Arab Americans... Each Woman and each man with the power of the vote.

Each with the ability to make history by that vote.

Each with the ability to change history with that vote.

Tonight we will listen and in 39 days on the first Tuesday in November in the year 2008 we will change the world with that vote.