



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 10, 2003

CONTACT: 248.320.7300

John Akouri Elected to City Council

Michigan Arab-American to be Sworn-in Today

(FARMINGTON HILLS, MI) John Akouri, who ran a successful first time campaign for City Council in Farmington Hills, was sworn-in today at a City Hall ceremony as the city's first American-born Lebanese Councilman. He had served as Washington, DC spokesman for US Rep. Joe Knollenberg (R-MI), and beat three opponents to become the top vote getter and win a seat on the Council. Akouri was administered the oath of office by Michigan Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly in the suburban community of Farmington Hills which is situated northwest of Detroit and is the largest city in Oakland County – one of the wealthiest in the nation.

Addressing a live television audience from his new seat on the dais at City Hall Council Chambers, Akouri thanked the 4000 residents of Farmington Hills who cast their ballots in his name for election commenting, **“Through its vote last week, the electorate has assembled a great team of professionals to lead this city and I look forward to serving on Council with them. Our city’s neighborhoods are filled with a rich cultural, racial and religious diversity and I am honored and humbled that they have placed their vote of confidence in me to serve on their City Council.”**

“When I started this campaign, I said then and I maintain today, that I want to make government rest in the hands of the people. Our campaign was one that dealt with issues, experience, loyalty and community service,” Akouri said. **“We must continue to work to foster economic growth and prosperity for all residents, to strengthen the society we direct for our youth, children and families, to ensure first-rate public services, safeguard our city, enhance the quality of life for our residents and work to increase our property values.”**

Akouri then thanked his family and grass-roots campaign supporters saying, **“Their tireless efforts and hard work are a testament to a candidate in which they truly believed in and spread his message of vision and leadership in the 21st century throughout the community and for that I will forever be grateful to them.”**

The youngest Member on Council, Akouri is extremely proud of his personal background and heritage as an American of Lebanese descent, and the accomplishments the Arab American community has achieved here in the United States. His family originally hails from the northern port city of Tripoli, Lebanon and upon immigrating to America, Akouri's grandfather was the owner/operator of a market in Detroit that survived existence during the Great Depression. Hence, the strong Lebanese qualities of community service and work ethic were passed down through the generations.

Seven former Mayors, Boards & Commission Members, numerous County Commissioners, the Observer & Eccentric Newspaper, the Chaldean Detroit Times, the Mid-East News, Radio & TV Orient, the Western Wayne Oakland County Association of Realtors (WWOCAR), the Farmington Area Republican Club and Chamber of Commerce had all endorsed Akouri, during his campaign.

Hon. John Akouri can be reached by email at johnakouri@yahoo.com or by phone at 248.320.7300 or by fax at 248.848.8804 or by postal mail at 27905 Brandywine Drive Farmington Hills, MI 48334

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JOHN AKOURI BIO

Hon. John Akouri is the former Washington, DC Press Secretary and Director of Communications to US Rep. Joe Knollenberg (R-MI). In his capacity as spokesman and chief speech-writer for the Congressman, he has worked daily with both the International & National press corps, also serving as a senior advisor on major policy and global issues with a specific focus on the Middle East. In addition to conducting media research, formulating proposals, and monitoring legislation in issue areas he was instrumental in coordinating the legislative agenda and securing federal appropriations in conjunction with the Legislative Director and Appropriations Committee. As creator and executive producer of "Window to Washington", he hosts the nationally award-winning television program cablecast in over 30 communities throughout southeast Michigan.

A native of Farmington Hills, he is a lifelong resident of Michigan and a product of the Farmington Public School system. An alumnus of both Oakland Community College and Wayne State University, and as a distinguished FOX News Intern, his active involvement in politics and public affairs span the course of the past two decades. Since the late 1980's, he has been a leader in government, media and business at the local, state and national levels. Professionally, he has worked as a media consultant to Governor John Engler, Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham, and to many Congressional Members as well as an Official Photographer for the Bob Dole Presidential Campaign.

As a charter member of the Multi-cultural Multi-racial ad-hoc committee, he was presented with the Community Council's 2002 Rainbow Recognition Award. In 1998, he was appointed by the Mayor to serve on the prestigious Zoning Board of Appeals, where he quickly rose to the Executive position of Secretary of the Board and a member of the Michigan Society of Planning Officials. John hosted the first citywide volunteer live telethon in 1995 to aid various agencies and organizations, and from 1989-1992 served on the Committee to Increase Voter Participation Commission. Truly a hometown son, he was asked by the City Council to lead the City in the Pledge of Allegiance following September 11, 2001 during a televised council meeting at City Hall.

Called a 'Rising Star' by the Observer & Eccentric newspapers, over the years John has appeared in several commercials airing in the Detroit Television market. He annually hosts the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Gala Benefit, which seeks to raise funds to assist children locally and for the charitable organization based in Memphis, Tennessee. He proudly served on the local board of the Miss America Pageant as Chairman of the Scholarship Committee and is listed in the Who's Who in Young Americans.

As past President of the Board of Directors at the Longacre House Community Center, he raised thousands of dollars for its senior citizens projects. Active with the National Exchange Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, International Visitors Council, Chamber of Commerce, Leader Dogs for the Blind, The Salvation Army, Southwestern Oakland County Cable Television, St. Fabian Catholic Church Parish Ministry and as a duly elected Precinct Delegate, John is visible each and every day in all corners of the community. His neighbors named him Kendallwood Farms Subdivision representative to the Council of Homeowners Association.

From appearances in Washington Newspapers, BBC Radio and Middle-East Television, he still considers Michigan home. As he begins his own journey in politics, he leaves our nations capital committed to mounting a strong grass-roots campaign that has taken him throughout the Detroit metropolitan area. A proven leader, visionary, and man of the people, he is considered to have universal appeal and the unique ability to forge coalitions among all people with the promise of honest representation.

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