



REPORT CONGRESSIONAL RECEPTION & MEETINGS 2017

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October 25-26, 2017 | Capitol Hill | Washington, D.C



Senator Jack Reed (D, RI)
Caucus Co-chair

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Message from the Chair – Angela Simões

PALCUS was founded for the sole purpose of representing the interests of the Portuguese community at the national level. After 26 years of existence, it is a testament to our founders and the directors and members that have continued to carry this torch and maintained an active voice on Capitol Hill for our community.

The PALCUS Congressional Reception is planned as an annual gathering of the members of the Portuguese-American Congressional Caucus and Friends of Portugal in the U.S. Senate, key influencers and PALCUS Charter members to facilitate direct communication and cultivate strategic relationships. It is also an opportunity to recruit new members of Congress to join the caucuses to better represent their Portuguese-American constituents.

This reception is an important touchstone to raise awareness and educate legislators on key issues, and as you will see, continues to serve as a means for us to continue to grow our representation and our voice.

□ A Message from H.E. António Guterres Secretary-General of the United Nations

MESSAGE TO "CONGRESSIONAL RECEPTION" OF THE PORTUGUESE-AMERICAN LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES

Washington, D.C., 25 October 2017

It is a pleasure to greet the Portuguese-American Leadership Council of the United States on the occasion of your congressional reception.

Thank you for everything you do to promote the well-being of the Portuguese-American community. I particularly welcome your focus on young people.

Portuguese-Americans have a long and distinguished history, and continue to make contributions that enrich both the United States and Portugal. Like so many other communities, you are showing that diversity is a richness. At a moment of rising intolerance around the world, that is a timely and important message.

The world faces serious challenges, from climate change and armed conflict to poverty and prejudice. But we also have remarkable opportunities to transform our world for the better.

The United Nations will count on your leadership and support. One might say that by virtue of having taken up my duties earlier this year and living in New York City, I am, at least temporarily, part of your community. I look forward to working together, in the spirit of our shared heritage, to build a future of peace and dignity for all.

Please accept my best wishes for a memorable gathering.



António Guterres
Secretary-General of the
United Nations

A photograph of Congressman Jim Costa, an older man with white hair, wearing a dark blue suit, light blue shirt, and a purple and white striped tie. He is seated at a wooden desk in a hearing room, holding a silver microphone in his right hand and looking slightly to his left. The background shows other empty desks with microphones and wood-paneled walls.

Congressman Jim Costa (D, CA-16)
Caucus Co-chair

Overview

As part of its government relations program, PALCUS advocates for the Portuguese-American community through dialogues with elected officials on Capitol Hill.

On October 25th, the 2017 Congressional Reception took place in the John D. Dingle Energy and Commerce Committee Room, Rayburn Office Building in Washington, D.C. with members of the Portuguese-American Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives, Friends of Portugal in the U.S. Senate, Ambassador of Portugal H.E. Domingos Fezas Vital and other key influencers and community leaders in attendance. Topics of importance to the community and the maintenance of U.S.-Portugal bilateral relations were discussed.

On October 26th, PALCUS directors held meetings with caucus co-chairs in order to convey the preliminary results of the PALCUS Index National Survey, report on changing demographics in congressional districts with high Portuguese populations and to encourage legislators to invite their colleagues to join the caucuses. As a result, two additional congressmen joined the House Caucus, Hon. Jerry McNerney (D, CA-9) and Hon. Scott Peters (D, CA-52).

□ Event Objectives

In keeping with its mission "...to be the national voice that advocates for and promotes the advancement of the Portuguese-American community economically, professionally, culturally and politically," PALCUS engages in dialogues that educate elected officials on issues of concern to the community.

Both the Congressional Reception and the follow-up meetings on Capitol Hill were organized to fulfill the following objectives:

- 1) To bring Portuguese-American community leaders face-to-face with legislators representing districts with high Portuguese populations to discuss matters of concern to the community;
- 2) To report the results of the PALCUS Index National Survey to co-chairs of the Portuguese-American Caucus in the House of Representatives and the Friends of Portugal in the Senate as relates to:
 - a) Demographic changes in high population Portuguese-American districts and states;
 - b) Attitudes of Portuguese-Americans concerning political participation, social concerns, personal health and education development and perceived community challenges;
- 3) To reiterate concerns relative to U.S.-Portugal bilateral relations such as the Visa Waiver program and the status of U.S. presence in the Azores, i.e. Lajes Air Base on the island of Terceira;
- 4) To encourage the caucus co-chairs to invite their congressional colleagues representing high Portuguese-American populations to join them thereby strengthening the respective caucuses.

Disclaimer: Ever mindful its status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization under the IRS tax code, PALCUS' activities are strictly limited to dialogue with and education of elected officials. At no time, does PALCUS aim to promote or endorse political parties or candidates and does not seek to influence pending legislation.

The Congressional Reception was well attended by community leaders, PALCUS founders, directors and members. We were honored to have the presence of H.E. Domingos Fezas Vital, Ambassador of Portugal to the United States who addressed the gathering. Despite a last minute call for a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives, a number of legislators and their staff attended the reception to offer remarks and speak with guests.

H.E. Domingos Fezas Vital
Hon. Jack Reed (D, RI)
Hon. Sheldon Whitehouse (D, RI)
Hon. Jim Costa (D, CA-16)
Hon. David N. Cicilline (D, RI-1)
Hon. David Valadão (R, CA-21)
Hon. Joseph P. Kennedy, III (D, MA-4)
Hon. William Keating, (D, MA-9)
Hon. Leonard J. Lance (R, NJ-7)
Alysa Davis for Hon. Doug Lamborn (R, CO-5))
Ben Goldeen for Hon. Jim Costa (D, CA-16)
Natasha Silva for Hon. Stephen Lynch (D,MA-8)
Katherine Soares (NY)
Marie Fraley (RI)
Fernando G. Rosa (CT)
Manuel Geraldo (MD)
Manny Geraldo, II (DC)
Anabela Dacruz-Melo (NJ)
Cynthia Russo(NJ)
Mr & Mrs. Manuel Fernandes
Dr. Victor Mendes, UMass-Dartmouth
Mr & Mrs. Florentino Gregorio, Anchor Construction
Anibal Ramos, Potomac Concrete
Paula Nunes, Potomac Concrete
Zulmira Morais, Virginia Contractors Supply
Diana Morais, Virginia Contractors Supply
Manuel Fernandes, Fort Myer Construction
Eleuterio Casanova, Fort Myer Construction
Ferguson Waterworks
João Francisco, LUNAER Media and Consulting
Tony Simon, Simon Consulting
Mac Bernstein, DLA Piper
Jessica Wooley DLA Piper
Mr & Mrs. Rui Ponte
Jean Ponte
Mr. and Mrs. Greg Leonard
Mr. and Mrs. Doug Koenig
Adriano Fernandes
Ricky Fernandes
João Mourao
Ricardo Esteves
Joao Constantino
David Fraley
Ingrid Valentine

[illegible]



Hon. David Valadão (R, CA-21)
Caucus Co-chair



▣ Remarks

In addition to welcome remarks by Chairwoman Angela Simões and Ambassador of Portugal Domingos Fezas Vital, several senators and congressmen addressed the gathering at the congressional reception. Excerpts of their remarks are included here.



□ Chairwoman Angela Simões (Excerpts) as presented by Vice-Chairwoman Katherine Soares

Welcome to the PALCUS Annual Congressional Reception. First held in the early 90's when the Portuguese-American Caucus and Friends of Portugal were formed, we have hosted a few since then, and plan to host them annually in the future.

In fact, there are many initiatives, new and existing, that PALCUS is launching or reviving in an effort to maintain strong engagement with the congressional caucuses and other key government influencers and community leaders. These initiatives are designed to engage lawmakers and the community in conversation and action. Please allow me to highlight just a few of them: the new PALITICUS podcast, where we highlight the stories of elected officials in our communities, the National Database of all elected officials, at the local, state and federal levels, and the Biannual Meeting of Luso-American Elected Officials, held here in Washington, D.C. in collaboration with the Embassy of Portugal expanded this year to include the Inaugural National Conference. And finally, we have launched the first national survey of Portuguese-Americans, known as the PALCUS Index. This survey, conducted annually, will provide invaluable insight into the attitudes of the national Portuguese community and track changes over time.

We are also very excited that President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa and Prime Minister António Costa, will be visiting our communities in June of 2018 to help celebrate the Day of Portugal throughout the country.

We are pleased to recognize that the governments of Timor-Leste and Australia are very close to reaching an agreement on the maritime borders dispute. We welcome their delegation here tonight. PALCUS and the national Portuguese-American community have long been supporters of the people of Timor-Leste in their fight for independence.

These initiatives require the full support of all members of the Caucus and Friends. We need your help to strengthen these two groups with new members who represent districts and states with high populations of Portuguese-Americans. We have our work cut out for us, but we are excited about the opportunities and we look forward to working with all of you and your staff in the coming months.



Angela Simões

PALCUS Chairwoman

California

□ H.E. Domingos Fezas Vital

I would like to thank PALCUS, for organizing this meeting and their sponsors for making it possible. PALCUS has a new leadership, a leadership for the future. I would like to start by wishing Angela and her team all success.

PALCUS is also the image of a Portuguese community that is increasingly more influential and more present in the economic, social, academic and political fabric of this country.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation for the presence of so many members of the Portuguese-American Caucus and of the Group of Friends of Portugal in the Congress and to thank them for their support in promoting the relations between our two countries.

In June, the President of the Portuguese Republic and the Prime Minister will be visiting the United States to celebrate with the Portuguese-American community, our National Day. We refer to our National Day as the Day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities Abroad. This means that without our communities, Portugal is not complete.

Also in June, besides the visit of the President and of the Prime Minister, we will organize a 'Month of Portugal', a series of cultural, artistic, economic and political events throughout the United States that will celebrate the friendship between our two countries.

As part of the 'Month of Portugal', PALCUS and the Embassy of Portugal will be organizing the Inaugural Conference of the Portuguese-American Community, which will take place on June 23rd, in Washington. The conference will bring together for the first time community, political and business leaders to discuss issues of common concern and reflect about the present and the future of our community.

Ambitions are high. This is good. May our action be led by the words of our great poet, Fernando Pessoa, 'Deus quer, o homem sonha e a obra nasce.' 'God wills, man dreams, the work is born.'



H.E. Domingos Fezas Vital
Ambassador of Portugal

□ Hon. Jack Reed (D, RI)

"I want to recognize Ambassador Domingos Fezas Vital. Thank you for your good work representing Portugal. We have so much in common, as we are both committed to ideals of freedom and justice. We are partners in NATO. We are partners in so many different things.

I will just simply reflect on the fact that so much of our country has been built by strong and proud Portuguese-Americans. We owe a great debt to them. They like other people who have come here, they are Americans but they are Americans with a particular spirit of industry and decency and we celebrate that."



Hon. Jack Reed
U.S. Senate

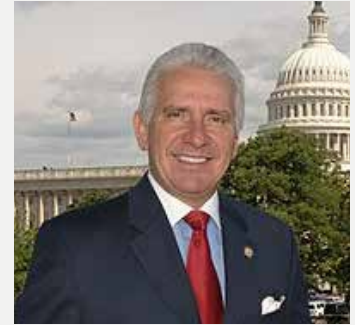
□ Hon. Jim Costa (D, CA- 16)

"PALCUS is an important effort on behalf of Portuguese Americans throughout our country ...that allows our communities' voices to be heard. It has a rich history and obviously, the challenges we face together are ones that require an organization like PALCUS to exist. If PALCUS didn't exist we would have to create it, because it's important and it's necessary.

As members of the Portuguese caucus, a bipartisan group of members, our goal every year is to promote US - Portugal relations. Portugal was the second country in the world to recognize the United States after independence. It has also been one of the longest alliances that has existed in the world. That relationship withstood the test of time and Portugal has always been a reliable member of NATO.

We are focused on trying to look at the best way to repurpose our resources in what relates to the Azores and Lajes, and we are working with our Ambassador on the tourist visa issue. Those are among the issues David Valadão and I and other members of the Portuguese caucus work on, on behalf of US-Portuguese relations.

However, the important thing is that each and every one of you that are involved as members of PALCUS understand that the role you play is important and it makes a difference. It makes a difference for those of us in the Portuguese caucus and it makes a difference to our Portuguese communities throughout the country."



Hon. Jim Costa
U.S. House of Representatives

□ Hon. David Valadão (R, CA-21)

"Portugal and the United States have had a long relationship and we want to make sure we continue to foster that relationship. We have always had strong representation from Portugal to the U.S. Our ambassadors have always done a great job, however, we also need all of you, working the Hill and talking to folks as well, helping to build the relationships.

There are a lot of other countries that have worked for a lot longer than us and I think we have a bit of catching up to do. I think you guys are on a good path to do that. I am glad that you are all here. It is important for us all.

My parents were Portuguese immigrants themselves . I grew up in a household in a Portuguese community. Still to this day they try to be as active as they possibly can in the local community. It's important that we continue to work together and continue to build on the next generation, to understand what the heritage is and how great it has been for a lot of us."



Hon. David Valadão
U.S. House of Representatives

□ Hon. Leonard Lance (R, NJ- 7)

"Welcome to the Energy and Commerce Committee Room. This is our main hearing room for the oldest committee in the House, first established in 1795. It and the Ways and Means Committee are considered the two most important committees in the House.

.....Certainly, we welcome you. The district I serve in New Jersey, has a descendance of immigrants from all over the world, including Portugal. I am pleased that several of the constituents whom I serve are in the audience this evening.

You are welcome on Capitol Hill at any time and certainly, we believe the strength of this nation is based on its strong immigrant heritage and may that continue. We want a strong and vibrant United States based upon those who have chosen to live here either personally, or through ancestors, and we hope in your visits in Capitol Hill that you will be welcomed cordially by all of us."



Hon. Leonard Lance
U.S. House of Representatives



Hon. William Keating, (D, MA-9)



□ Interviews

A number of interviews were conducted with caucus members representing districts with high Portuguese-American populations.

The objective of the interviews was to understand and document the congressmen's perspectives regarding the Portuguese communities they serve as well as the functioning of the Portuguese-American congressional caucuses.

The interviews have been edited and condensed for clarity.



□ Hon. Joe Kennedy (D, MA-4)

1. What are the most pressing issues in your district right now?

There are a few issues that I think stand out regardless of where you are and where you live. The cost of housing and the cost of education, trying to make sure that everybody has a job that can meet their basic needs, making sure that your kids are going to do well and that you are saving for retirement and I think those are pretty universal concerns no matter where you are.

2. Are you aware of any specific issues related to the Portuguese communities?

There is a large Portuguese community that lives in my district, south and west of Boston. It's a vibrant and strong community as I have learned travelling around the country and around the state of Massachusetts.

The challenge that we face at the moment across our country is that you see the fabric of our country falling apart. You see a raucous debate - a polarization across our communities. What we need more than anything is to celebrate those ties that pull people together.

When you visit those communities in Massachusetts that I represent, that have a strong community of Portuguese descent, they have cultural ties. They have a language and a common heritage and a common culture. And it's those communities that are so strong despite all the challenges. It's inspiring for me to be able to visit them and to take that lesson back. Despite the challenging times we are in, these communities like Taunton, Massachusetts, like Fall River, still continue to be strong, holding together and looking out for each other.

3. Regarding U. S. and Portugal relations, what do you think is working well and can be improved?

Portugal has long been a staunch ally of the United States and that has to be recognized by the United States, recognized by policy makers here in Washington. The fact is that it's a critically important country in Europe. It has gone through its own economic transition. The United States always remembers our friends and however I can be of service to continue to strengthen that friendship, I'd be honored to.

□ Hon. David Valadão (R, CA-21)

1. What are the most pressing issues in your district right now?

In my district, it is mainly water. It is a big issue for us. Immigration is also a very important issue for us too, infrastructure, and things like that. Water is one because I have a large agricultural district and need to make sure we have water there to grow crops, and water for our communities.

2. Are you aware of any specific issues related to the Portuguese communities?

In my district, there is a large Portuguese population, many of them farmers. So, issues that affect the community in general, are very important. But other issues, like Lajes, are very important. What is going on there on the islands right now, it's something that a lot of them pay attention to. As far as immigration itself, it's an important issue to them as well.

3. Regarding U. S. and Portugal relations, what do you think is working well and can be improved?

Well, I do believe that if we could come to a conclusion on the Lajes (air base) and work a little bit closer to the Portuguese government, it would help quite a bit. Again, the immigration issue is something we need to talk a little bit more about to make sure we have something that works for all. I listen to a lot of Portuguese immigrants in the U.S., and there are a lot of folks that are still kind of in limbo regarding their status. Thus, I think those are issues that can help both countries.

4. What do you think can be done to strengthen the functioning of the caucus and the communication among its members?

To strengthen the caucus and those who are supportive of it, obviously making sure that the folks like the group here now, PALCUS, is spending some time on Capitol Hill educating members on issues that are important to the Portuguese community. That would strengthen us because it would give us more voices here in Washington that understands the issues.

5. Why are you a member of the Portuguese American caucus?

I'm very proud of my heritage. I grew up in a Portuguese home. My mom and dad are immigrants and still to this day are involved in even some of the Portuguese 'festas', and things around my community. It's my background, it's my heritage and it's something I enjoy.

□ Hon. William Keating (D, MA-9)

1. What are the most pressing issues in your district right now?

We have the opportunity for the largest offshore wind facility in the entire United States and that is something that's going to be a great benefit to our area in terms of jobs and renewable energy. If we look at the example of Portugal and how quickly they have moved to renewable energy. They are an example for most countries in the world and certainly for our country. So, we are trying to emulate the success that Portugal has had in renewables, so that is a very important issue in my district.

Another important issue is immigration, because I think I have the largest Portuguese American constituency of any house district in the United States. Thus, of course, we have issues with immigration, because we have families that are here and with the DACA issue as well as other issues in immigration. If you went to my office, you would see the majority of the work we do is on that issue, so we need comprehensive immigration reform in our country.

We also have the largest fishing yield city in the entire United States, in the city of New Bedford. Again drawing on the Portuguese culture, there's such a history and a legacy for that. So you can get the connection in so many different ways how the issues we have had side discussions about here today, are important issues in my district.

2. Are you aware of any specific issues related to the Portuguese communities?

We have been working on the Lajes base issue because that's something where the U.S. has diminished its role and that has an effect on jobs in the Azores that is very critical. So there's a group of us that are working to try and utilize that base and keep the jobs there. It's important for the local community but it's also I think strategically important for our military as well.

3. Regarding U. S. and Portugal relations, what do you think is working well and can be improved?

In my district I see the blend of history and working together, so that is clearly working well. I'm on the Foreign Affairs Committee and one of our greatest allies when we have a global issue that is always there side by side with the U.S. has been Portugal, which is very important. I understand the value of that.

In terms of what we have to improve on, I think again getting back to the Lajes base. That's something that I think that people would like to see the U.S. concentrate on making that what it was before and moving forward on that, so I think that could use improvement from our end.

□ Hon. William Keating (cont.)

4. What do you think can be done to strengthen the functioning of the caucus and the communication among its members?

The caucus is a very tight-knit group and what's interesting is that it's coast to coast. We have members that are very active from California, the West Coast, and then you have areas like mine on the East Coast, so it's a group that really transcends the whole width of the United States of America. We also not only deal with issues but we also know how to bond together and have fun, which I think is great as it keeps us very close together.

5. Why are you a member of the Portuguese American caucus?

There are many reasons, one is because I have the highest concentration of Portuguese Americans, who of course I want it to be successful on issues that bring us together.

Moreover, as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee I do know the value one of our best allies. That should be strengthened and people should know the good news story of how Portugal and the U.S. stood side by side. This is historic and it is over decades and decades of working together.

The reasons we have caucuses? It really boils down to telling stories and making the rest of Congress aware of the issues that are important and what brings us together. So, a lot of what we do is promotional. We bond together to tell the other members who may not know as much of the story (by) promoting that story.





Capitol Hill Meetings

In keeping with its mission of advocacy for the Portuguese-American community, PALCUS Directors arranged follow-up meetings with the co-chairs of the congressional caucuses on Capitol Hill.

□ Capitol Hill Meetings

In an effort to maintain strong bipartisan engagement with members of the Portuguese-American Caucus in the House of Representatives and with members of the Friends of Portugal in the Senate, a series of meetings were held between PALCUS Directors and elected officials on October 26, 2017.

The purpose of these meetings was to educate and inform the caucus co-chairs regarding changing demographics and insights into the Portuguese-American mindset discovered through the recent PALCUS Index National Survey as well as about upcoming PALCUS initiatives relative to civic engagement.

Meetings were held with (*denotes Portuguese ancestry):

Friends of Portugal in the U.S. Senate Co-chairs:

- Senator Jack Reed (D, RI)
- Senator Pat Toomey* (R, PA)

Portuguese-American Caucus in the House of Representatives Co-Chairs

- Congressman Jim Costa* (D, CA-16)
- Congressman David Valadao* (R, CA-21)
- Congressman David Cicilline (D, RI-1)
- Congressman Lee Zeldin (R, NY-1)

During these meetings a multi-faceted program designed to engage lawmakers with community leaders was presented. These programs include:

PALITICUS Podcast

Regular podcasts presented where Portuguese-American elected and appointed officials at national, state and local levels are interviewed to drive a more active dialogue in the community around politics, the importance of civic engagement and issues that affect our community directly. <https://soundcloud.com/paliticus>

Annual National Survey

An annual national survey of the Portuguese-American community to tap attitudes and practices on what matters to them most, where they prioritize their time, effort and money, and how strongly they are connected to Portugal. English: <http://bit.ly/PALCUSIndex> Portuguese: <http://bit.ly/PALCUSIndexPortuguese> (1200 responses as of October 2017)

□ Capitol Hill Meetings (cont.)

Elected Officials National Database

(Forthcoming) A complete, up-to-date national database of Portuguese-American elected and appointed officials at the local, state and federal levels, as well as those that represent large Portuguese-American populations.

Annual Congressional Reception

An annual gathering of the members of the Portuguese-American Caucus and Friends of Portugal in the Senate, key influencers and PALCUS Charter members to provide the opportunity for direct communication with constituents.

Biannual Meeting of Luso-American Elected Officials

Bi-annual forums held in Washington, D.C. in collaboration with the Embassy of Portugal to explore ways to encourage more Portuguese-Americans to run for office and participate in public service.

Lusitanian Forums

Meetings that will bring together experts from both the U.S. and Portugal to address key issues and topics affecting our community, and developing a plan on how to deal with those issues. Proposed topics include: U.S. Census, Technology & Business, Lajes Air Base utilization, Portuguese language instruction.

Government Relations Liaison

An individual who is dedicated to meeting with key influencers and legislators on Capitol Hill in order to inform the Portuguese-American agenda on a regular basis.

□ Portuguese-American Caucus of the U.S. House of Representatives

Co-Chairs and Members:

Rep. David Cicilline , Co-Chair, (D,RI-1)
Rep. Jim Costa *, Co-Chair, (D, CA-16)
Rep. David G. Valadao *, Co-Chair, (R, CA-21)
Rep. Lee Zeldin, Co-Chair, (R, NY-1)
Rep. Jeff Denham, (R, CA-10)
Rep. Lloyd Doggett, (D, TX-35)
Rep. Marcia L. Fudge, (D, OH-11)
Rep. Darrell Issa, (R, CA-49)
Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, (D, TX-18)
Rep. William Keating, (D, MA-9)
Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy III (D, MA-4)
Rep. Jim Langevin, (D, RI-2)
Rep. Doug Lamborn, (R, CO-5)
Rep. John Larson, (D, CT-1)
Rep. Zoe Lofgren, (D, CA-19)
Rep. Stephen Lynch, (D, MA-8)
Rep. Jim McGovern, (D, MA-2)
Rep. Richard E. Neal, (D, MA-1)
Rep. Devin Nunes *, (R, CA-22)
Rep. David Rouzer, (R, NC-7)
Rep. Linda Sanchez, (D, CA-38)
Rep. Albio Sires, (D, NJ-8)
Rep. Eric Swalwell, (D, CA-15)
Rep. Niki Tsongas, (D, MA-3)
Rep. Steve Womack, (R, AR-3)
Rep. Jerry McNerney (D, CA-9)
Rep. Scott Peters (D, CA-52)
Rep. Ro Khanna (D, CA-17)

* Portuguese descent

□ Friends of Portugal in the U.S. Senate

Co-Chairs and Members:

Sen. Jack Reed, Co-Chair, (D, RI)

Sen. Patrick Toomey*, Co-Chair, (R, PA)

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, (D, CT)

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, (D, CA)

Sen. Kamala Harris, (D, CA)

Sen. Ed Markey, (D, MA)

Sen. Elisabeth Warren, (D, MA)

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, (D, RI)

* Portuguese descent



□ Conclusions and Outcomes

The 2017 Congressional Reception and Meetings held on Capitol Hill on October 25 and 26, 2017 were important steps in revitalizing one of the primary initiatives upon which PALCUS was founded. Both events provided direct contact with elected officials to advocate for issues of concern both nationally and at the district level.

A number of themes surfaced through remarks and interviews at the Congressional Reception:

- **U.S.-Portugal Bilateral Relations:** Ambassador Domingos Fezas Vital and members of both caucuses reaffirmed the strong and enduring historical relationship between the two allies and the desire to maintain it.
- **Lajes Air Base in Terceira, Azores:** Caucus members re-stated the need for the U.S. to work with Portugal to re-purpose the air base for the benefit of both the Azores and the United States.
- **Immigration Reform:** Legislators on both coasts expressed concerns heard from constituents in their respective districts about Portuguese-Americans left 'in limbo' due to uncertainties in recent immigration policies.
- **Protecting and harnessing natural resources:** From water conservation in the farming districts of California to wind farms and fishing production in Massachusetts, Portuguese-Americans are economically impacted on both coasts by the management of natural resources.
- **Communication through the caucuses:** Congressional leaders reiterated the need for PALCUS to maintain its advocacy role by promoting the dialogue between constituents and legislators in order to keep them informed and to continue to 'tell the story' to other legislators about the community's needs and attitudes.

The Capitol Hill Meetings were instrumental in bringing new data directly to the caucus co-chairs:

- **Identifying demographic shifts** in Portuguese-American population drives the need for representation in the caucuses in districts such as Florida and Arizona where there are increasing numbers of retirees;
- **Current trends in attitudes and opinions** regarding civic engagement (voting, donations, contacting Congress), political issues (current leadership, terrorism, war, climate), personal concerns (cost of education, saving for retirement, taxes, healthcare costs) and perceived community challenges (Portuguese language education, youth participation, cultural maintenance);
- **Upcoming programs** in which the legislators can participate;
- **A tentative timeline of events for 2018** including the Inaugural National Conference and the visit of President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa of the Republic of Portugal in June, 2018.

□ Conclusions and Outcomes (cont.)

Through both events, PALCUS created the opportunity for the community to integrate with the government sector. By bringing much needed information to the caucuses, legislators were informed about the community's needs and attitudes. As a direct result of this effort, three additional congressmen joined the Portuguese-American Caucus in the House:

- Hon. Jerry McNerney (D, CA-9)
- Hon. Scott Peters (D, CA-52)
- Hon. Ro Khanna (D, CA-17)

PALCUS is in frequent contact with caucus members' staff to follow-up on these discussions.







□ A Note of Thanks

PALCUS wishes to thank the staff of the co-chairs of the congressional caucuses, most specifically Ben Goldeen (Congressman Jim Costa) and John Nobrega (Senator Jack Reed) for their invaluable assistance in organizing these events.

PALCUS acknowledges with gratitude the support of the following generous sponsors:

- Anchor Construction
- Ferguson Plumbing Supply
- Potomac Concrete
- Virginia Contractors Supply Inc.
- Fort Myer Construction
- LUNAER Media
- Signature Printing





□ Addenda

□ PALCUS Index National Survey

PALCUS has launched a national survey of Portuguese-Americans to ascertain information about community demographics, attitudes and concerns. It aims to discover information, such as how Portuguese-Americans prioritize their time, effort and money, and how strongly they feel connected to Portugal, that can be applied towards program development and policy decision-making.

The survey was conducted online, primarily solicited via email and Facebook, with both English (<http://bit.ly/PALCUSindex>) and Portuguese (<http://bit.ly/PALCUSindexPortuguese>) versions of the survey made available. More than 1200 responses were collected between August – October 2017.

Additional Caveats

- Data collection is based on a sample of convenience, i.e. social media and PALCUS' membership;
- Respondents in the aggregate to date are more educated and have higher incomes than the average Portuguese American population;
- Alternative ways of attaining a more representative sample of the Portuguese American population are being explored such as hard copy surveys and interviews;
- Results reflect only responses gathered thus far.

Demographic Information

- Participation by Age: 82% between 24-64, 13% over the age of 75, and 3% under the age of 24;
- Participation by Gender: 42.4% Male, 57% Female, .6% preferred not to answer;
- Participation by Birth: 58.4% born in the US, 40% born in Portugal or another country;
- Participation by State: California (46%); Massachusetts (12.5%), New York (6.5%), New York (6.3%).

Political Activity

- Voting in United States elections was high with 76.7% reporting that they vote regularly in elections, which is 20 points higher than the national average of 55.5%;
- 35% have called or written their elected officials;
- 30% contribute to political campaigns;
- 13% have worked on a political campaign;
- 1.3% have run for public office.

□ PALCUS Index National Survey (cont.)

From an overall social and political perspective, the greatest concerns in our community are:

1. Our country's political leadership – 71.1%
2. The US Going to war with other countries – 56.6%
3. Terrorism – 44.5%
4. The US limiting immigration – 39%

From an overall personal and economic perspective, the greatest concerns in our community are:

1. Cost of education – 68%
2. Access to healthcare – 60.3%
3. Saving for retirement – 57%
4. Social security and Medicare – 54.2%
5. Increase in taxes – 50.8%.

Greatest challenges in the Portuguese community?

- Getting more people involved in community organizations – 54.9%
- Maintaining the Portuguese language – 54.6%
- Political representation at the local, state and federal levels – 48.5%

Additional challenges extracted from comments:

- Divisions among Portuguese organizations
- Transition of organizational leadership to the next generations
- Letting go of old cultural practices (nostalgia) and adopting Portuguese contemporary/pop culture
- Decline in immigration from Portugal
- Services for the elderly in Portuguese language
- How Portuguese are labeled in US society
- Portuguese needing to participate in mainstream society

Survey Design / Data Analysis: Dulce Maria Scott, PhD Anderson University and PALCUS Research Fellow

PALCUS Index Committee: Angela Simoes, Dulce Maria Scott, Katherine Soares, Marie Fraley, Diniz Borges and Deolinda Adão.

□ Portuguese-American Congressional Caucus

Current Members in Districts with High Portuguese Populations

Co-chairs:

- Jim Costa (CA-16)
- David Valadão (CA-21)
- David Cicilline (RI-1)
- Lee Zeldin (NY-1)

First Name	Last Name	Party / St / District	Port. Population
Lloyd	Doggett	D-TX 35	623
Marcia	Fudge	D-OH 11	201
Zoe	Lofgren	D-CA 19	13,918
Sheila	Jackson Lee	D-TX 18	300
Bill	Keating	D-MA 9	110,598
James	Langevin	D-RI 2	34,363
Jim	McGovern	D-MA 2	10,316
Richard	Neal	D-MA 1	14,368
Linda	Sanchez	D-CA 38	2,990
Niki	Tsongas	D-MA 3	17,828
Joseph P.	Kennedy	D-MA 4	71,148
David	Valadao	R-CA 21	8,668
Devin	Nunes	R-CA 22	18,210
David	Cicilline	D-RI 1	59,296
Jim	Costa	D-CA 16	17,010
Lee	Zeldin	R-NY 1	2,705
Steve	Womack	R-AR 3	668
Jeff	Denham	R-CA 10	34,843
Darrell	Issa	R-CA 49	4,600
Stephen	Lynch	D-MA 8	21,636
David	Rouzer	R-NC 7	685
Albio	Sires	D-NJ 8	19,294
John	Larson	D-CT 1	10,447
Eric	Swalwell	D-CA 15	17,973
Doug	Lamborn	R-CO 5	685

Source: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members/map>

□ Portuguese-American Congressional Caucus

Prospective Members in Districts with High Portuguese Populations

First Name	Last Name	Party / St / District	Port. Population
Katherine	Clark	D-MA 5	10,173
Seth	Moulton	D-MA 6	20,373
Michael	Capuano	D-MA 7	9,614
Joe	Courtney	D-CT 2	11,129
Rosa	DeLauro	D-CT 3	9,154
Jim	Himes	D-CT 4	9,329
Elizabeth	Esty	D-CT 5	10,211
Leonard	Lance	R-NJ 7	12,468
Donald M.	Payne,Jr.	D-NJ 10	7,686
Peter "Pete"	King	R-NY 2	2,853
Tom	Suozzi	D-NY 3	1,503
Kathlene	Rice	D-NY 4	4,330
Eliot	Engel	D-NY 16	3,772
Nita	Lowey	D-NY 17	3,454
Sean Patrick	Maloney	D-NY 18	2,364

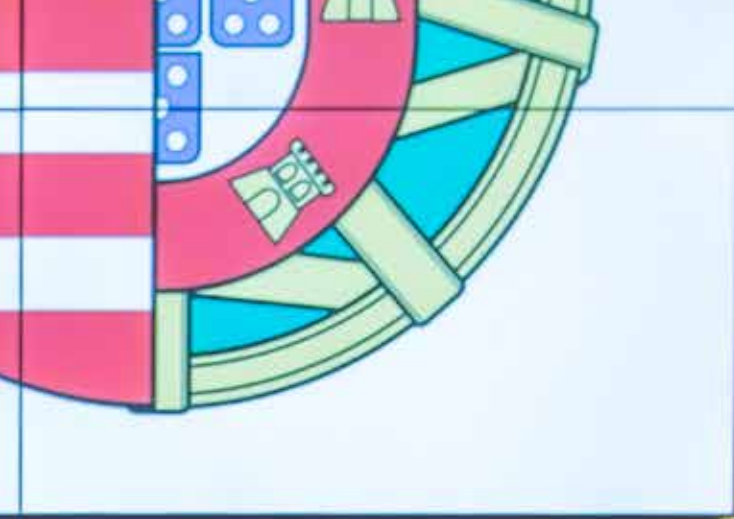
Source: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members/map>



PALCUS



PALCUS Directors (Left to Right): Fernando Rosa, Cynthia Russo, Marie Fraley, Katherine Soares, Manuel Geraldo, Anabela DaCruz-Melo, Manuel Geraldo II.



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