

**RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE APRIL 2024 AS ARAB AMERICAN HERITAGE  
MONTH**

**BY COUNCIL MEMBER GABRIELA SANTIAGO-ROMERO**

- WHEREAS,** The Greater Detroit area is home to one of the largest, oldest and most diverse Arab American communities in the United States, with an estimated population of 300,000 to 350,000; and
- WHEREAS,** Although Arab Americans share a common linguistic and cultural heritage, the Arab American population is ethnically, religiously, and politically diverse, spanning 22 countries from North Africa to the Arabian Gulf; and
- WHEREAS,** The Arab American community has had a visible influence in Detroit and the surrounding communities, most notably Dearborn, which is a hub of Arab American business, food, entertainment, education, and cultural events; and
- WHEREAS,** Arab Americans have brought with them to the United States their resilient family values, strong work ethic, dedication to education, and diversity in faith and creed that have added strength to our democracy; and
- WHEREAS,** For over a century, Arab Americans have been making valuable contributions to every aspect of American society—in medicine, law, business, technology, civic engagement, government, and culture; and
- WHEREAS,** According to Census Bureau data, Arabic is one of the fastest growing languages in the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** The Federal Government has overstepped its constitutional boundaries in regard to surveillance and suspicion of the Arab-American community as far back as the 1960s, when the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) included Arabs as targets of its Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO); and
- WHEREAS,** Media representations of Arab Americans in the post-9/11 era reinforce longstanding racial stereotypes about Arabs, which contribute to anti-Arab hate crimes and obscure the actual character and complexity of community members; and
- WHEREAS,** Systemic and structural anti-Arab discrimination have impacted the health outcomes, socioeconomic conditions, and life chances of Arab Americans in ways not captured by the Federal data on racial and ethnic minorities, leading to the persistence of racial disparities; and
- WHEREAS,** There is a need for public education, awareness, and policies that are culturally competent when describing, discussing, and addressing the impacts of being Arab American in all aspects of American society; and
- WHEREAS,** President Biden recognized the celebration of Arab American Heritage Month in an April 19th, 2021, letter to Arab America and the Arab America Foundation,

making him the first sitting U.S. President to do so with at least 40 states and numerous cities also celebrating April as Arab American Heritage Month; and

**WHEREAS**, The incredible contributions and heritage of Arab Americans have helped us build a better Detroit and a better Nation; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

**RESOLVED**, That the Detroit City Council recognizes April as Arab American Heritage Month.