

Proclamation

Board of Commissioners for Washington County

A PROCLAMATION IN HONOR OF ARAB AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH 2024

WHEREAS, the Washington County Board of Commissioners proudly recognizes April 2024 as Arab American Heritage Month, honoring this community’s valuable contributions to our nation, state and county in all aspects of society, setting fine examples of model citizens and public servants; and

WHEREAS, we celebrate this year’s Arab American Heritage Month theme of “Arab American Awareness,” shining a light on the long overdue acknowledgement of this vibrant community’s existence whose heritage was only recognized in Oregon since 2021 and nationally in 2023; and

WHEREAS, since first migrating to America in the 1880s, Arab Americans have brought their strong work ethic, dedication to education and diversity in creed, adding strength to our democracy. As a result, today, nearly 3.7 million Americans are of Arab descent; and

WHEREAS, almost 32,000 Arab Americans are Oregonians and more than 6,700 of them are Washington County residents. Furthermore, Oregon has welcomed many refugees of Arab descent recently, in line with Oregon’s tradition of open arms to those in need; and

WHEREAS, Victor George Atiyeh, served as the 32nd Governor of the State of Oregon from 1979 to 1987, giving the state the distinction of being the first with an elected Arab American governor; and

WHEREAS, Arab-Americans are designated “White” in the U.S. Census and thus not officially recognized as a minority, excluding them from the assistance of policies established to support such groups, while still being excluded from whiteness and its associated privileges; and

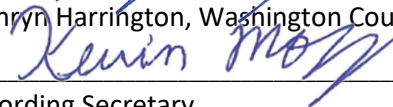
WHEREAS, for over a century, Arab Americans have endured longstanding misrepresentation in the media, and more recently, harmful discriminatory policies targeting them, making the celebration of Arab American cultural heritage key to educating our fellow Americans of our contributions; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim April 2024 as Arab American Heritage Month and calls upon the people of Washington County to observe this month with relevant programs, activities, and reflections to create a more inclusive, just and prosperous world for all.





Kathryn Harrington, Washington County Board Chair



Recording Secretary

24-75

Minute Order