

HOUSE BILL NO. 5936

September 17, 2024, Introduced by Rep. Farhat and referred to the Committee on Government Operations.

A bill to declare the powers and duties of the commission on Middle Eastern American affairs; and to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state governmental officers and entities.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. This act may be cited as the "commission on Middle
2 Eastern American affairs act".

3 Sec. 3. As used in this act:

4 (a) "Commission" means the commission on Middle Eastern
5 American affairs described in Executive Reorganization Order No.

1 2019-3, MCL 125.1998.

2 (b) "Department" means the department of labor and economic
3 opportunity.

4 (c) "Middle Eastern American" means an individual who has
5 ancestral ties to countries in the Middle East and who resides in
6 this state.

7 Sec. 5. (1) The governor shall appoint the members of the
8 commission by and with the consent of the senate. The commission
9 must consist of 15 individuals who have a particular interest or
10 expertise in Middle Eastern American concerns in this state.

11 (2) The term of a member who is appointed to the commission on
12 or after the effective date of this act is 3 years.

13 (3) If a vacancy occurs on the commission, the governor shall
14 appoint an individual to fill the vacancy for the balance of the
15 term.

16 (4) The governor may remove a member of the commission for
17 incompetence, dereliction of duty, malfeasance, misfeasance, or
18 nonfeasance in office, or any other good cause.

19 Sec. 7. (1) The commission shall annually elect a member as a
20 chairperson and may annually elect a vice-chairperson and other
21 officers that it considers necessary or appropriate.

22 (2) Not later than 90 days after the effective date of this
23 act, the commission shall adopt bylaws for its operation.

24 (3) The commission shall meet at least quarterly at places and
25 times determined by the commission, or more frequently, with 3
26 business days' notice, at the call of the chairperson or at the
27 request of 8 or more members of the commission.

28 (4) A majority of the members of the commission constitute a
29 quorum for the transaction of business of the commission. A vote in

1 favor by the majority of the members of the commission serving is
2 required for any action of the commission. A member of the
3 commission may not vote by proxy.

4 (5) The commission shall conduct its business in compliance
5 with the open meetings act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275.

6 (6) A writing that is prepared, owned, used, possessed, or
7 retained by the commission in performing an official function is
8 subject to the freedom of information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231
9 to 15.246.

10 (7) A member of the commission shall refer any legal,
11 legislative, and media contacts to the department.

12 Sec. 9. (1) The commission shall do all of the following:

13 (a) Act in an advisory capacity to the governor and the
14 director of the department on policy matters impacting Middle
15 Eastern American communities in this state.

16 (b) Advise the department and make recommendations on all of
17 the following:

18 (i) Changes in state programs, statutes, and policies
19 concerning the coordination and administration of state programs
20 serving Middle Eastern American communities.

21 (ii) The nature, magnitude, and priorities of the problems of
22 Middle Eastern American communities in this state and the state's
23 policies concerning or impacting those communities.

24 (iii) Improving and protecting the health, safety, and well-
25 being of Middle Eastern American communities across all levels of
26 state and local government.

27 (iv) Attracting potential future residents from Middle Eastern
28 American communities by ensuring that this state is a safe place
29 where members of Middle Eastern American communities and their

1 families can thrive.

2 (c) Review, develop, and recommend policies, administrative
3 actions, legislative changes, or other approaches to eradicate and
4 prevent discrimination and to address other forms of inequality.

5 (d) Promote methods to ensure equal access to state services
6 for Middle Eastern American communities.

7 (e) Work to ensure equal access to all levels of education for
8 Middle Eastern American communities.

9 (f) Serve as a reporting agency for incidents of anti-Middle
10 Eastern American harassment in this state.

11 (g) Publicize and disseminate information on relevant issues,
12 available programs and resources, funding opportunities, and other
13 information that is relevant to advancing the interests of Middle
14 Eastern American communities in this state by addressing the
15 communities' unique problems and needs.

16 (h) Promote Middle Eastern American culture, history, and
17 economic contributions in this state through coordinated efforts
18 and advocacy across state government.

19 (i) Promote public awareness of experiences of Middle Eastern
20 American communities in this state.

21 (j) Secure appropriate recognition for accomplishments and
22 contributions of Middle Eastern American communities in this state.

23 (k) Develop a unified policy and plan of action to serve the
24 needs of Middle Eastern American communities in this state.

25 (l) Stimulate and encourage the study and review of the status
26 of Middle Eastern American communities in this state.

27 (m) Advocate for and initiate programs for the betterment of
28 Middle Eastern American communities in this state.

29 (n) Cooperate with and coordinate activities with all of the

1 following commissions and councils:

2 (i) This state's Asian Pacific American affairs commission
3 created in Executive Order No. 2009-21.

4 (ii) The Hispanic/Latino commission of Michigan created under
5 section 2 of 1975 PA 164, MCL 18.302.

6 (iii) The Black leadership advisory council created in Executive
7 Order No. 2020-163.

8 (iv) This state's LGBTQ+ commission created in Executive Order
9 No. 2023-5.

10 (v) The Michigan immigrant and refugee council.

11 (vi) The Michigan women's commission created in section 1 of
12 1968 PA 1, MCL 10.71.

13 (o) Provide other information or advice as requested by the
14 governor or the director of the department.

15 (2) The commission may do either or both of the following:

16 (a) As necessary, establish advisory workgroups composed of
17 individuals or entities that participate in the commission's
18 activities to assist the commission in performing its duties under
19 this section.

20 (b) Adopt, reject, or modify any recommendations of an
21 advisory workgroup described in subdivision (a).

22 (3) The commission shall exercise its powers and duties under
23 this section independently of the department except for budget,
24 procurement, and management functions, which must be performed
25 under the direction and supervision of the director of the
26 department.

27 Sec. 11. (1) The department shall do all of the following:

28 (a) Provide administrative services to the commission.

29 (b) Make the times and places of commission meetings available

1 to the public.

2 (c) Keep the minutes of the commission's meetings.

3 (d) Maintain a record of the commission's actions.

4 (2) Subject to appropriation, the department may provide staff
5 and office space to enable the commission to carry out its powers
6 and duties under section 9.