



NEWS RELEASE

WAYNE COUNTY COMMISSION

Office of Public Information

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Release Date: April 17, 2023

Commission calls on feds to recognize Middle Eastern, North African ethnicity

Wayne County Commissioners have called on the federal government to begin recognizing Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) as a specific racial and ethnic identity.

At present, Americans of Middle Eastern and North African heritage are generally included with those identified as Caucasian and of European ancestry.

“It is important to make a distinction because issues faced by the MENA community aren’t necessarily the same, particularly when it comes to health care,” Commissioner Sam Baydoun (D-Dearborn) said. “Middle Eastern and North African should be recognized as being distinct.”

The federal Office of Management and Budget is currently reviewing changes to its policy directive, potentially directing federal agencies to begin collecting data specific to the MENA Community.

The resolution introduced by Commissioner Baydoun calls on the Office of Management and budget to, “include MENA as a race and ethnicity standard within data collection methods.” It also calls for Middle Eastern and North African to be designated as a special racial and ethnic identity in future U.S. Censuses.