



AGENDA REPORT

City Council

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| DATE: | April 15, 2025 |
| TO: | Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council |
| FROM: | Council Member Soheila Bana |
| Subject: | Support for Assembly Bill 91 (AB91) – Middle Eastern and North African MENA Inclusion Act |
| FINANCIAL IMPACT: | There is no direct fiscal impact associated with adopting this resolution. |
| PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: | None |
| STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE: | Assembly Bill 91 addresses a long-standing issue by requiring state and local agencies to collect demographic data to include separate categories for major Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) groups. The bill would ensure that MENA individuals are visible in state data and that resources and policies reflect the reality of their communities. |
| RECOMMENDED ACTION: | ADOPT a resolution recognizing the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) community in the City of Richmond and to urge the California State Legislature to support and adopt Assembly Bill 91 (AB 91), also known as the MENA Inclusion Act, which seeks to require the State of California and local agencies to collect disaggregated demographic data on MENA populations - Councilmember Soheila Bana (510-672-3490). |

DISCUSSION:

The City of Richmond is home to a diverse population, including individuals of Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) descent who represent a variety of cultural, linguistic, and national backgrounds. These residents are integral to the social, economic, and civic fabric of the city.

Despite their significant presence and contributions, the MENA community has historically been overlooked in demographic data collection efforts. MENA individuals are typically categorized as “White” in demographic data, masking disparities and needs specific to their communities and limiting their access to targeted programs and funding.

Assembly Bill 91 addresses a long-standing issue by requiring state and local agencies to collect demographic data to include separate categories for major Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) groups. The bill would ensure that MENA individuals are visible in state data and that resources and policies reflect the reality of their communities. By passing this resolution, the City of Richmond affirms its commitment to equity, inclusion, and representation for all its communities. Recognizing the MENA community as a distinct racial and ethnic group ensures their contributions are acknowledged and their needs considered in policy and funding decisions.

Supporting AB 91 aligns with Richmond’s values and positions the city as a regional leader in equitable governance and data-driven decision-making. The resolution will also signal solidarity with other municipalities and community advocates across California who are calling for equitable data practices and resource allocation.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – Resolution

Attachment 2 – Fact Sheet AB 91