

**HB 2914 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Carrier:** Sen. Wagner

**Senate Committee On Rules**

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**Action Date:** 06/17/21

**Action:** Do pass.

**Vote:** 3-1-1-0

**Yeas:** 3 - Burdick, Girod, Wagner

**Nays:** 1 - Thatcher

**Exc:** 1 - Manning Jr

**Fiscal:** No fiscal impact

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

**Prepared By:** Leslie Porter, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 6/17

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Designates April of each year as Arab-American Heritage Month.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- The ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity of Arab-Americans
- Oregon universities are home to many international students
- International businesses may be attracted to states that value diversity

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

The history of Arab-Americans in the United States is not widely known and is subject to mischaracterization. Arab-Americans are targets of bigotry, anti-Arab rhetoric, and hate crimes. Issues currently affecting Arab-Americans include civil rights abuses, harmful stereotyping, and bullying. Persons of Arab descent share rich cultural traditions while also setting examples as model citizens and public servants. Arab-Americans have resilient family values, strong work ethics, dedication to education, and diversity in faith and creed. Arab-Americans enrich society by sharing an entrepreneurial spirit that is the hallmark of a free and prosperous nation.

For more than a century, Arab-Americans have been making valuable contributions to every aspect of society, including science, medicine, law, business, education, technology, government, military service, and culture. The late honorable Victor George Atiyeh, 32nd Governor of the State of Oregon (from 1979 to 1987), was the first Arab-American governor elected in the United States.

House Bill 2914 designates April of each year as Arab-American Heritage Month to encourage education and awareness, and to recognize shared goals for peaceful societies that keep diverse individuals safe and treat them as equals.