



Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs

*Virtual ZOOM
Tuesday, April 7, 2025
7:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.*

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present:

Anthony Browder, Member
Tharwat Abouraya, Chair
Dr. Majd AlGhatrif, Member
Dr. Amal K. Ali, Member
Athar Bayoumi, Member
Dr. Bagher Fardanesh, Member
Rabbi Dr. Susan Grossman, Member
Dr. Ayesha A Gulistan, Member
Mona Kishore, Member
Mohammad Khalil, Member
Francis J. Ricciardone, Member
Dr. Aharona (Roni) Rosenthal, Member
Dr. Laura H. Salganik, Member
Ala'a Wafa, Member

Commissioners Absent:

Shivaani Arya, Member
Ammar Abdulhamid, Member
Alissa Deaver, Member
Rafi Rone, Member

GOCI Staff:

- ❖ Dr. Antwan Brown, Administrative Director for GOCI
- ❖ Cheryl Madigan – Executive Assistant for GOCI

I. Call to Order:

Tharwat Abouraya, Chair – Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda:

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
To adopt the agenda	Majd AlGhatrif	Bagher Fardanesh	12Y-0N-0A



III. Reading of the original draft Statement:

AD Antwan Brown:

The Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs amendment (applauded the passing) stands in support of HB899, a bill to recognize January as Muslim Heritage month and May as Jewish Heritage Month in the state of Maryland. This bill helps to not only highlight the beautiful and rich religious diversity in the state but recognizes the contributions of a large portion of the Middle Eastern American community identifying with these two faiths. By recognizing these two months as Muslim and Jewish Heritage Months, respectively amendment, (the Middle Eastern Commission will support) programming and initiatives that help inform Marylanders about these two large faith communities, which will undoubtedly help to build on the rich and inclusive culture of this great state.

This above statement is for the passing of the bill. **AD Brown** would like to recommend this change. "Respectively, the Middle Eastern Affairs Commission will support programming and initiatives".

Revised Statement:

The Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs (applauds the passing) stands in support of HB899, a bill to recognize January as Muslim Heritage month and May as Jewish Heritage Month in the state of Maryland. This bill helps to not only highlight the beautiful and rich religious diversity in the state but recognizes the contributions of a large portion of the Middle Eastern American community identifying with these two faiths. By recognizing these two months as Muslim and Jewish Heritage Months, respectively, (the Middle Eastern Commission will support) programming and initiatives that help inform Marylanders about these two large faith communities, which will undoubtedly help to build on the rich and inclusive culture of this great state.

IV. Approval of the draft Statement on the HB899 Bill:

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Approval of the draft Statement on the HB899 Bill	Francis Ricciardone	Laura Salganik	14Y-0N-0A

VII. Motion for Adjournment:

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote
Adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m.	Francis Ricciardone	Mohammad Khalil	14Y-0N-0A