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HOUSE BILL NO. 203

Offered January 14, 2026

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 24 of Title 2.2 an article numbered 21.1, consisting of sections numbered 2.2-2461.1 through 2.2-2461.4, relating to executive branch advisory board; Middle Eastern and North African Advisory Board.

Patrons—Reaser, Carnegie, Clark, Cole, J.G., Cole, N.T., Feggans, Henson, Keys-Gamarra, Maldonado and Martinez; Senators: Boysko, Marsden, Salim and Srinivasan

Referred to Committee on Rules

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 24 of Title 2.2 an article numbered 21.1, consisting of sections numbered 2.2-2461.1 through 2.2-2461.4, as follows:

*Article 21.1.**Middle Eastern and North African Advisory Board.*

§ 2.2-2461.1. Middle Eastern and North African Advisory Board; membership; terms; compensation and expenses.

A. The Middle Eastern and North African Advisory Board (the Board) is established as an advisory board, within the meaning of § 2.2-2100, in the executive branch of state government. The Board shall consist of 21 nonlegislative citizen members, at least 15 of whom shall be of Middle Eastern or Northern African descent, who shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. In addition, the Secretaries of the Commonwealth, Commerce and Trade, Education, Health and Human Resources, Public Safety and Homeland Security, and Transportation, or their designees, shall serve as ex officio members without voting privileges. All members shall be residents of the Commonwealth.

B. After the initial staggering of terms, nonlegislative citizen members shall be appointed for a term of four years. Appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired terms. No member shall be eligible to serve more than two successive four-year terms; however, after the expiration of the remainder of a term to which a member was appointed to fill a vacancy, two additional terms may be served by such member if appointed thereto.

C. The Board shall elect from its membership a chairman and vice-chairman. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. Meetings of the Board shall be held upon the call of the chairman or whenever the majority of the members so request.

D. Members of the Board shall receive no compensation for their services, but shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in §§ 2.2-2813 and 2.2-2825.

§ 2.2-2461.2. Powers and duties.

The Board shall have the power and duty to:

1. Advise the Governor regarding the development of economic, professional, cultural, educational, and governmental links between the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Middle Eastern and North African community in Virginia;

2. Undertake studies, symposiums, research, and factual reports to gather information to formulate and present recommendations to the Governor relative to issues of concern and importance to the Middle Eastern and North African community in the Commonwealth; and

3. Advise the Governor as needed regarding any statutory, regulatory, or other issues of importance to the Middle Eastern and North African community in the Commonwealth.

§ 2.2-2461.3. Staff; cooperation from other state agencies.

The Office of the Governor shall serve as staff to the Board. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall assist the Board upon request.

§ 2.2-2461.4. Sunset.

This article shall expire on June 30, 2029.