

SUMMARY—Designates the month of July as Muslim American Heritage Month.

(BDR 19-924)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.

Effect on the State: No.

AN ACT relating to periods of observance; designating the month of July of each year as “Muslim American Heritage Month” in this State; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel’s Digest:

Under existing law, certain days, weeks and months of observance are recognized in this State. (NRS 236.018-236.095) This bill designates the month of July of each year as “Muslim American Heritage Month” in the State of Nevada and requires the Governor to issue annually a proclamation encouraging the observance of this month.

WHEREAS, The Muslim American community in Nevada can trace its beginnings to the mid-20th century; and

WHEREAS, Masjid As-Sabur is the oldest mosque in Las Vegas, Nevada and has served the local community since the 1970s; and



WHEREAS, The Northern Nevada Muslim Community was established in 1980 to serve the community in and around Reno, Nevada; and

WHEREAS, Muslim Americans have contributed to the society of Nevada and the United States by making advancements in architecture, arts, business, community, culture, government, law, medicine, the military, religion and sports; and

WHEREAS, Many Muslim Americans pursue the American Dream and contribute to the economy of Nevada and the United States as business owners and entrepreneurs; and

WHEREAS, Sharaf Haseebullah is a pharmacist, drugstore owner and real estate investor in Las Vegas, and became the first woman to fund a mosque in North America entirely by herself when she built Masjid Ibrahim in Las Vegas in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Fateen Seifullah, the Imam of Masjid As-Sabur works to revitalize the Historic Westside neighborhood of Las Vegas through community building and providing vital resources, programs and services to people in need, among other community service initiatives; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ahmed Essa was a professor of English at the University of Nevada, Reno from 1967 to 1991, and was the founder of the Northern Nevada Muslim Society in the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, The Muslim population has been growing in both Nevada and the United States, and Sharaf Haseebullah, Fateen Seifullah and Dr. Ahmed Essa are just a few examples of the several thousand-strong Muslim American population in Nevada who contribute to the greater community of this State and constitute a rich tapestry of ethnic, racial, linguistic, social and economic groups; and



WHEREAS, Nearly 50 percent of Muslim Americans have reported experiencing religious discrimination, with that number rising to 64 percent for Muslim Americans whose appearance identifies them as Muslim, such as women who wear the hijab or a headscarf; and

WHEREAS, There is a need for public education, awareness and policies that help people be culturally competent when describing, discussing or addressing the impacts that Muslim Americans have on all aspects of the society of Nevada and the United States; now therefore,

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 236 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. The month of July of each year is designated as “Muslim American Heritage Month” in this State.

2. The Governor shall issue annually a proclamation encouraging the observance of Muslim American Heritage Month. The proclamation may, without limitation, call upon the news media, state and local officers, private nonprofit groups and foundations, schools, businesses and other public and private entities to bring to the attention of Nevada’s residents the important contributions Muslim Americans have made to the State of Nevada and the United States.

