



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 23-1387, Version: 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING A MEETING OF THE COOK COUNTY LEGISLATION AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS ASIAN AMERICAN AND MENA DATA COLLECTION

WHEREAS, Cook County is one of the largest and most racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse counties in the country; and

WHEREAS, Cook County Government is committed to supporting equitable, inclusive and accessible government; and

WHEREAS, Cook County Government must collect accurate data to understand and serve the specific needs of its diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans include people whose origins and ancestries lie in East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans include over 20 ethnicities speaking 2,300 languages and dialects; and

WHEREAS, there were approximately 409,000 Asian American residents in Cook County representing 7.7% of the County's population according to the 2020 US Census; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans experienced a 28.2% population increase, the highest population growth rate in Cook County between 2010 and 2020, according to the US Census Bureau; and

WHEREAS, Cook County recognizes Asian Americans as a minority group; and

WHEREAS, Cook County recognizes the rise in anti-Asian hate and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, Cook County does not comprehensively or consistently collect data on Asian Americans; and

WHEREAS, MENA is a collective term for people whose origins and ancestries lie in the Middle East and North Africa; and

WHEREAS, MENA include 24 nationalities and ethnicities; and

WHEREAS, according to an analysis by AMVOTE PAC, there were approximately 167,000 registered MENA voters in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, Illinois has the 4th largest MENA population in the US and the Chicago Metropolitan area is home to the fourth largest urban concentration of MENA populations in the US, according to 5 Year American Community Survey data 2010-2014; and

WHEREAS, Cook County recognizes that the MENA community experienced a rise in hate and discrimination following 9/11 and subsequent US conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, MENA individuals are currently subsumed under the white Race category by the US Census Bureau, per directive of the US Office of Management and Budget; and

WHEREAS, the identification of MENA individuals as white does not reflect the identity or lived experiences of the MENA community; and

WHEREAS, Cook County does not collect data on MENA identified persons; and

WHEREAS, the lack of comprehensive and consistent data on Asian Americans and MENA population hinders Cook County's ability to understand and serve these communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners request the Offices Under the President and separately elected offices come before the Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Committee to detail current Asian American data collection practices as well as the operational capacity for future MENA data collection; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that these offices meet with and provide a detailed report on their current data collection practices including any data collection documents that ask for racial or ethnic demographic information, whether they include Asian American or MENA categories or not, and provide these to the resolution sponsor(s) and the Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Committee Chair for distribution to the Cook County Board of Commissioners prior to their appearance before the Committee.