WHEREAS, The Persian New Year, or Nowruz, originated in the Iranian plateau more than 3,000 years ago and is celebrated annually marking the Spring Equinox in the northern hemisphere, which this year fell on March 20th at 2:24 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, Nowruz is a significant cultural holiday for individuals in Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan which is celebrated by nearly 300 million people across the globe of different faiths and cultures, particularly in and by more than 1 million Americans, including tens of thousands in Washington state; and

WHEREAS, Nowruz welcomes spring and regrowth after winter and periods of cold and dormancy and it celebrates nature, life, and opportunity for regrowth and blossoming; and

WHEREAS, In this time where mistrust and fear often threaten to divide us, the spirit of Nowruz inspires us to realize our commonalities and strive for new levels of compassion, understanding, and love for our fellow human beings irrespective of religion or ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, Many Middle Eastern and Central Asian individuals immigrate to Washington to flee persecution for their beliefs, seeking personal and religious freedoms in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Middle Eastern and Central Asians are an important part of our communities and continue to make noteworthy and lasting contributions to Washington state through their leadership in
business, government, higher education, medicine, military service, law, social justice, and many other arenas; and

WHEREAS, Nowruz presents a fitting opportunity to recognize these contributions and the resilience of the Iranian-American and Afghan-American communities who continue to advocate for their communities; and

WHEREAS, Nowruz is a time for all of us to come together to reflect on the year that has passed and celebrate the universal values of generosity, compassion, selflessness, and community stewardship in the year ahead;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives celebrate the honored holiday of Nowruz; recognize the historical and cultural significance thereof; stand with the communities that celebrate Nowruz in times of crisis and in times of celebration; and wish a happy and prosperous new year to all.

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