

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 97

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 60

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 97—Relative to Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State June 25, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 97, Perea. Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

This measure would designate November 2012 as California Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month. It would recognize and acknowledge the significant contributions made by Californians of Sikh heritage to the state and afford all Californians the opportunity to understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared principles of Sikh Americans.

WHEREAS, California and our nation are at once blessed and enriched by the unparalleled diversity of our residents; and

WHEREAS, Among this unprecedented diversity in California, there reside an estimated 250,000 Americans of Sikh origin, comprising nearly 40 percent of the nation's estimated Sikh population; and

WHEREAS, Sikh immigrants have resided in California for more than a century, with the first Sikh immigrants having labored on railroad construction projects, in lumber mills, and in the agricultural heartlands of the Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Imperial valleys; and

WHEREAS, The first Sikh temple (Gurdwara) in California was established in Stockton in 1912, and Sikh temples have since been established in communities throughout California, especially in the central valley, with more than a dozen in Fresno alone; and

WHEREAS, While Sikh Americans have distinguished themselves in numerous areas of endeavor, they have demonstrated particular success in the areas of agriculture, trucking, medicine, and in the creation of small, family-owned businesses; and

WHEREAS, Yuba City boasts the largest population of Sikh and Punjabi Americans in the nation and the central valley boasts the second largest population; and

WHEREAS, Representative Dalip Singh Saund of California, born in Amritsar, India, was a lettuce farmer in the Imperial Valley and an elected judge of the Justice Court in the Westmoreland Judicial District before becoming the first Sikh American and Asian American member of the United States Congress, where he served from 1957 to 1963; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bhagat Singh Thind, born in Taragarh, India, was a soldier, scholar, and activist who served in the United States Army during

World War I, studied at University of California, Berkeley, and struggled and fought for Asian Indians to be allowed to become American citizens; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Narinder Singh Kapany of Palo Alto, born in Moga, India, is an accomplished scientist and inventor who has been awarded over 100 patents, spurring advancements in lasers, biomedical instrumentation, solar energy, and pollution monitoring, and is widely acknowledged to be the father of fiber optics, a technology that has allowed for high-speed, digital communication; and

WHEREAS, Sikh Americans have served as mayors of California cities, including David Dhillon in El Centro, Gurpal Samra in Livingston, Amarpreet “Ruby” Dhaliwal in San Joaquin, and Kashmir Singh Gill in Yuba City, and numerous Sikh Americans have served as council members of California cities; and

WHEREAS, The Sikh and Punjabi American communities of California continue to make important contributions to our state and nation; and

WHEREAS, Sikh Americans throughout California celebrate the coronation day of Sikh Scripture as Guru Gaddi Divas, along with parades in cities across California, the largest being held in Yuba City on the first Sunday of every November followed by the second largest in Selma, California; and

WHEREAS, The Sikh Council of Central California, representing a dozen main Sikh temples in the Fresno County area, actively takes part in the Multifaith Exchange and Interfaith Alliance meetings and seminars to share their monotheistic religion and the tenets of their faith, and the important role that Sikh Americans play in furthering mutual understanding and respect among all peoples; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby designates the month of November 2012 to be California Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature recognizes and acknowledges the significant contributions made by Californians of Sikh heritage to our state, and by adoption of this resolution, seeks to afford all Californians the opportunity to better understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared principles of Sikh Americans; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution to the Members of the Legislature, members of the California Sikh American community, and other interested organizations or persons.