

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 25

Introduced by Assembly Member Wieckowski

February 22, 2013

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 25—Relative to Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 25, as introduced, Wieckowski. Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

This measure would designate November 2013 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.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, California and our nation are at once blessed and
2 enriched by the unparalleled diversity of our residents; and
3 WHEREAS, In our extremely diverse Golden State, there reside
4 an estimated 250,000 Sikh Americans, comprising about 40 percent
5 of the nation's Sikh population; and
6 WHEREAS, Sikh immigrants have resided in California for
7 more than a century, with the first Sikh immigrants having labored
8 on railroad construction projects, in lumber mills, and in the
9 agricultural heartlands of the Sacramento, San Joaquin, and
10 Imperial Valleys; and

1 WHEREAS, The first Sikh temple (Gurdwara) in California
2 was established in Stockton in 1912, and Sikh temples have since
3 been established in communities throughout California, some like
4 those in Fremont, San Jose, West Sacramento, and Yuba City being
5 huge with accommodations for thousands; and

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

11 WHEREAS, Yuba City is referred to by many as “Mini-Punjab”
12 with 10 percent of its population being Sikh or Punjabi; and

13 WHEREAS, Dalip Singh Saund, a Sikh, born in Punjab, India,
14 earned a Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley in
15 1924, initially earned his livelihood as a foreman of cotton pickers
16 in the Imperial Valley, became a farmer, played a major role in
17 funding the Luce-Celler Act of 1946 that enabled him and others
18 to naturalize as citizens, and served as an elected judge in the
19 Westmoreland Judicial District from 1952 to 1956, before
20 becoming the first Asian American elected to the United States
21 Congress, where he served three terms from 1957 to 1963; and

22 WHEREAS, Bhagat Singh Thind, another Sikh born in Punjab,
23 India, a United States Veteran of World War I, who campaigned
24 actively for the independence of India from the British Rule,
25 supported Indian students and lectured on metaphysics throughout
26 the United States, has been honored by the Fred Korematsu
27 Institute as a “Race in the Courts Hero” for fighting his citizenship
28 case in the United States Supreme Court in 1923; and

29 WHEREAS, Narinder Singh Kapany of Palo Alto, a Sikh born
30 in Punjab, India, is an accomplished scientist and inventor, has
31 been awarded over 100 patents that spurred advances in lasers,
32 biomedical instrumentation, pollution monitoring, solar energy,
33 and more, and is widely acknowledged to be the father of fiber
34 optics, a technology that has allowed for high-speed digital
35 communication; and

36 WHEREAS, Sikh Americans have served as mayors of
37 California cities, including David Dhillon in El Centro, Gurpal
38 Samra in Livingston, Amarpreet “Ruby” Dhaliwal in San Joaquin,
39 Sonny Dhaliwal in Lathrop, and Kashmir Singh Gill in Yuba City,

1 and numerous Sikh Americans have served as council members
2 of California cities; and

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

5 WHEREAS, The Yuba City Sikh Parade, which commemorates
6 the Guru Gaddee inauguration holiday of Sikhism's holiday
7 scripture, Siri Guru Granth Sahib, is held on the first Sunday of
8 each November, rain or shine, and, in recent years, the international
9 event has attracted between 60,000 and 100,000 participants; and

10 WHEREAS, Sikh Americans throughout California celebrate
11 the coronation of Sikh scripture and Sikh festivals at the Gurdwaras
12 and with parades in cities across California and the United States;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, The Sikh Council of Central California, other Sikh
15 organizations, and individual Gurdwaras participate in interfaith
16 meetings, seminars, conferences, meetings, and functions and share
17 the tenets of their monotheistic religion that respects other religions
18 and welcome all to their Gurdwaras, and try to further mutual
19 understanding and respect among all peoples; now, therefore, be
20 it

21 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
22 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby designates the
23 month of November 2013 to be California's Sikh American
24 Awareness and Appreciation Month; and be it further

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

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

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