

Dr.Bains's Resolution on Sikh Genocide in California Assembly

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 2

CHAPTER 129

Relative to Sikh genocide.

[Filed with Secretary of State July 20, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 2, Bains. Sikh genocide.

This measure would condemn the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide and would urge the United States Congress to formally recognize and condemn the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide.

Digest Key

Fiscal Committee: NO

Bill Text

WHEREAS, The Sikh community, which originated in Punjab, a region of South Asia now in Pakistan and India, began immigrating to the United States over 100 years ago and has played an important role in building agriculture, infrastructure, and communities across the United States and California; and

WHEREAS, Sikhism is the fifth-largest religion in the world with nearly 30,000,000 adherents, including approximately 500,000 in the United States, one-half of whom call California home; and

WHEREAS, Systemic and orchestrated genocidal violence was perpetrated against Sikhs in November 1984 in the capital territory of Delhi, the states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Maharashtra, and the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir; and

WHEREAS, During the anti-Sikh genocide, Sikhs were assaulted, tortured, burned alive, and murdered, and Sikh women, many of whom lost their families during the genocide, were sexually assaulted and raped by groups of attackers; and

WHEREAS, Sikh homes, businesses, and gurdwaras, or houses of worship, were looted, damaged, and destroyed during the genocide, causing the intentional destruction of many Sikh families, communities, homes, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, The Indian government, through officials and Members of Parliament and with the support of the police, led genocidal attacks and participated in, and failed to intervene to prevent, the genocide; and

WHEREAS, Over three days in November 1984, over 30,000 Sikhs were murdered; and

WHEREAS, The “Widow Colony” in New Delhi still houses Sikh women who were assaulted, raped, tortured, and forced to witness the dismemberment, burning, and murder of their families, and who are still calling for justice against the perpetrators; and

WHEREAS, The Sikh community in the United States has not recovered from the physical and psychological trauma of the genocide, as they keep alive the memory of those who were killed, and will never forget the anti-Sikh genocide; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Convention on Genocide states in Article II that, “genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group as such; (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part”; and

WHEREAS, On January 6, 2022, the Senate of the State of New Jersey unanimously passed Senate Resolution 142 condemning the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide; and

WHEREAS, On October 17, 2018, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania unanimously passed House Resolution 1160 condemning the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence as genocide; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing the state-sponsored violence that targeted Sikhs across India is an important and historic step towards justice, accountability, and reconciliation, which should be an example to other governments; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California condemns the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of the State of California urges the United States Congress to formally recognize and condemn the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States

House of Representatives, the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the United States Senate, and each member of the California delegation to the United States Congress.