

New Jersey Senate Resolution on Sikh Genocide

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 142 STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE INTRODUCED JANUARY 6, 2022 Sponsored by: Senator STEPHEN M. SWEENEY District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem) SYNOPSIS Condemns November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT As introduced. SR142 SWEENEY 2 A SENATE RESOLUTION condemning the November 1984 anti-Sikh 1 violence in India as genocide. 2 3 WHEREAS, The Sikh community, which originated in Punjab, India, and 4 began immigrating into the United States over 100 years ago, has 5 played an important role in developing the United States and New 6 Jersey; and 7 WHEREAS, Sikhism is the world's fifth-largest religion with nearly 30 8 million adherents, including roughly 1,000,000 in the United States; 9 and 10 WHEREAS, The Sikh genocide began on November 1, 1984, after the 11 assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the capital 12 territory of Delhi and the states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, 13 Haryana, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal 14 Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Jammu and Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, 15 Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and 16 Maharashtra; and 17 WHEREAS, The Sikh genocide lasted three days and over 30,000 Sikhs 18 were brutally murdered as they were hunted in their homes, where 19 they were hacked and burned alive; and 20 WHEREAS, On April 16, 2015, the California State Assembly 21 unanimously passed Assembly Concurrent Resolution 34, which 22 recognized the systematic and organized killings of Sikhs by the 23 Indian government in Delhi and remembered those who lost their 24 lives during the 1984 Sikh genocide; and 25 WHEREAS, On October 17, 2018, the General Assembly of the 26 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania unanimously passed House 27 Resolution HR-1160 declaring the November 1984 anti-Sikh 28 violence as genocide; and 29 WHEREAS, Eyewitnesses, journalists, and human rights activists have 30 compiled evidence showing that government and law enforcement 31 officials organized, participated in, and failed to intervene to prevent 32 the killings through direct and indirect means; and 33 WHEREAS, As recently as 2011, mass graves have been discovered in 34 the villages of Hondh Chillar and Pataudi in Haryana, and many 35 more will continue to be discovered in the future with Indian 36 government officials and police flouting impunity; and 37 WHEREAS, The "Widow Colony," the Tilak Vihar neighborhood in 38 New Delhi, still houses thousands of Sikh women, who were forced 39 to bear mass rape and witness the hacking, burning, and murder of 40 their husbands, fathers, and sons, and who are still calling for justice 41 against the perpetrators; and 42 WHEREAS, Many of the survivors of the Sikh genocide eventually 43 immigrated to the United States and established large Sikh 44 communities in places such as Fresno, Yuba City, Stockton, 45 Fremont, Glenrock, Pine Hill, Carteret, New York City, and 46 Philadelphia, among other places; and 47 SR142 SWEENEY 3 WHEREAS, The Sikh community in the United States and New Jersey 1 has recovered from the material damages of the genocide as they 2 continue to keep the memory of those who were killed alive and will 3 never forget the Sikh genocide; and 4 WHEREAS, Recognizing the state-sponsored violence that targeted 5 Sikhs across India in 1984 is an important and historic step towards 6 justice, accountability, and reconciliation, which should be an 7 example to other governments; now, therefore, 8 9 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the State of New Jersey: 10 11 1. The New Jersey Senate condemns the November 1984 anti-12 Sikh violence in India as genocide. 13 14 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, 15 shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President 16 and

Vice-President of the United States, the Majority and Minority 17 Leaders of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader 18 of the United States House of Representatives, and every member of 19 Congress elected from this State. 20 21 22 STATEMENT 23 24 This Senate resolution condemns the November 1984 anti-Sikh 25 violence in India as genocide. 26 The Sikh community, which originated in Punjab, India, began 27 immigrating into the United States over 100 years ago, and has 28 played an important role in developing the United States and New 29 Jersey. 30 The Sikh genocide began on November 1, 1984, after the 31 assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The Sikh 32 genocide lasted three days and over 30,000 Sikhs were brutally 33 murdered as they were hunted in their homes. The "Widow Colony," 34 the Tilak Vihar neighborhood in New Delhi, still houses thousands 35 of Sikh women, who were forced to bear mass rape and witness the 36 murder of their husbands, fathers, and sons, and are still calling for 37 justice against the perpetrators. 38 Eyewitnesses, journalists, and human rights activists have 39 compiled evidence showing that government and law enforcement 40 officials organized, participated in, and failed to intervene to prevent 41 the killings through direct and indirect means. 42 Many of the survivors of the Sikh genocide eventually immigrated 43 to the United States and established large Sikh communities in places 44 such as Fresno, Yuba City, Stockton, Fremont, Glenrock, Pine Hill, 45 Carteret, New York City, and Philadelphia. The Sikh community in 46 the United States and New Jersey has recovered from the material 47 SR142 SWEENEY 4