

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.



1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** condemning the November 1984 anti-Sikh
2 violence in India as genocide.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, The Sikh community, which originated in Punjab, India, and
5 began immigrating into the United States over 100 years ago, has
6 played an important role in developing the United States and New
7 Jersey; and
8 **WHEREAS**, Sikhism is the world's fifth-largest religion with nearly 30
9 million adherents, including roughly 1,000,000 in the United States;
10 and
11 **WHEREAS**, The Sikh genocide began on November 1, 1984, after the
12 assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the capital
13 territory of Delhi and the states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh,
14 Haryana, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal
15 Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Jammu and Kashmir, Chhattisgarh,
16 Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and
17 Maharashtra; and
18 **WHEREAS**, The Sikh genocide lasted three days and over 30,000 Sikhs
19 were brutally murdered as they were hunted in their homes, where
20 they were hacked and burned alive; and
21 **WHEREAS**, On April 16, 2015, the California State Assembly
22 unanimously passed Assembly Concurrent Resolution 34, which
23 recognized the systematic and organized killings of Sikhs by the
24 Indian government in Delhi and remembered those who lost their
25 lives during the 1984 Sikh genocide; and
26 **WHEREAS**, On October 17, 2018, the General Assembly of the
27 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania unanimously passed House
28 Resolution HR-1160 declaring the November 1984 anti-Sikh
29 violence as genocide; and
30 **WHEREAS**, Eyewitnesses, journalists, and human rights activists have
31 compiled evidence showing that government and law enforcement
32 officials organized, participated in, and failed to intervene to prevent
33 the killings through direct and indirect means; and
34 **WHEREAS**, As recently as 2011, mass graves have been discovered in
35 the villages of Hondh Chillar and Pataudi in Haryana, and many
36 more will continue to be discovered in the future with Indian
37 government officials and police flouting impunity; and
38 **WHEREAS**, The "Widow Colony," the Tilak Vihar neighborhood in
39 New Delhi, still houses thousands of Sikh women, who were forced
40 to bear mass rape and witness the hacking, burning, and murder of
41 their husbands, fathers, and sons, and who are still calling for justice
42 against the perpetrators; and
43 **WHEREAS**, Many of the survivors of the Sikh genocide eventually
44 immigrated to the United States and established large Sikh
45 communities in places such as Fresno, Yuba City, Stockton,
46 Fremont, Glenrock, Pine Hill, Carteret, New York City, and
47 Philadelphia, among other places; and

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1 **WHEREAS**, The Sikh community in the United States and New Jersey
2 has recovered from the material damages of the genocide as they
3 continue to keep the memory of those who were killed alive and will
4 never forget the Sikh genocide; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Recognizing the state-sponsored violence that targeted
6 Sikhs across India in 1984 is an important and historic step towards
7 justice, accountability, and reconciliation, which should be an
8 example to other governments; now, therefore,

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10 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

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12 1. The New Jersey Senate condemns the November 1984 anti-
13 Sikh violence in India as genocide.

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15 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
16 shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President
17 and Vice-President of the United States, the Majority and Minority
18 Leaders of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader
19 of the United States House of Representatives, and every member of
20 Congress elected from this State.

21

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23 STATEMENT

24

25 This Senate resolution condemns the November 1984 anti-Sikh
26 violence in India as genocide.

27 The Sikh community, which originated in Punjab, India, began
28 immigrating into the United States over 100 years ago, and has
29 played an important role in developing the United States and New
30 Jersey.

31 The Sikh genocide began on November 1, 1984, after the
32 assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The Sikh
33 genocide lasted three days and over 30,000 Sikhs were brutally
34 murdered as they were hunted in their homes. The "Widow Colony,"
35 the Tilak Vihar neighborhood in New Delhi, still houses thousands
36 of Sikh women, who were forced to bear mass rape and witness the
37 murder of their husbands, fathers, and sons, and are still calling for
38 justice against the perpetrators.

39 Eyewitnesses, journalists, and human rights activists have
40 compiled evidence showing that government and law enforcement
41 officials organized, participated in, and failed to intervene to prevent
42 the killings through direct and indirect means.

43 Many of the survivors of the Sikh genocide eventually immigrated
44 to the United States and established large Sikh communities in places
45 such as Fresno, Yuba City, Stockton, Fremont, Glenrock, Pine Hill,
46 Carteret, New York City, and Philadelphia. The Sikh community in
47 the United States and New Jersey has recovered from the material

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1 damages of the genocide as they continue to keep the memory of
2 those who were killed alive and will never forget the Sikh genocide.
3 This resolution recognizes and condemns the state-sponsored
4 violence that targeted Sikhs across India in 1984, an important and
5 historic step towards justice, accountability, and reconciliation,
6 which should be an example to other governments.