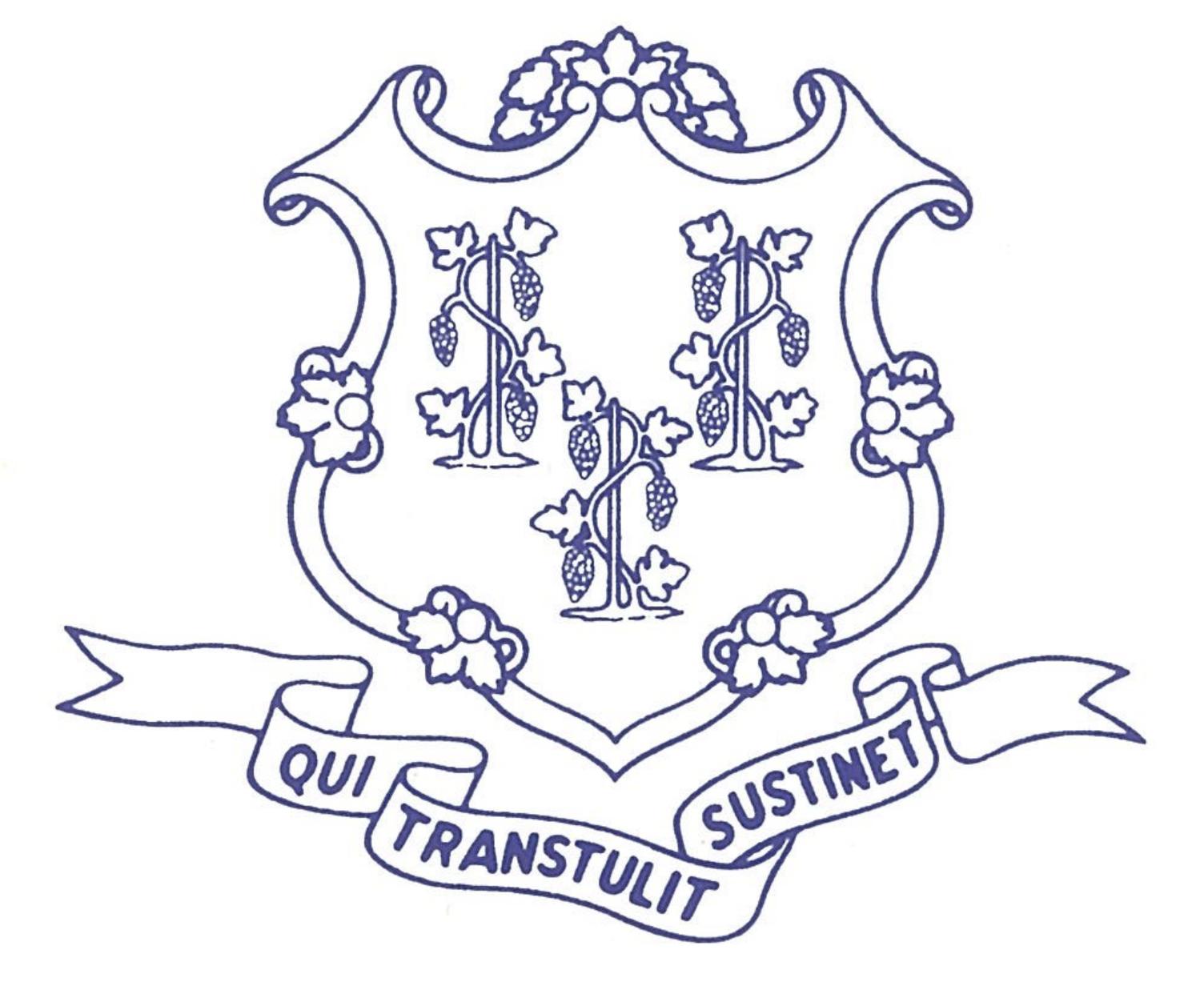
# THANK YOU STATE OF CONNECTICUT FOR RECOGNIZING APRIL 29<sup>TH</sup> SIKH DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE DAY



# State of Connecticut



# General Assembly Official Citation

Introduced by

Senator Catherine A. Osten, 19th Dist. Representative Kevin Ryan, 139th Dist. Senator Matthew L. Lesser, 9th Dist. Representative Doug Dubitsky, 47th Dist.

Senator Bob Duff, 25th Dist. Senator Saud Anwar, 3rd Dist. Representative Emmett D. Riley, 46th Dist.

Be it hereby known to all that: The Connecticut General Assembly offers its sincerest congratulations to:

> World Sikh Parliament In recognition of

the 36th anniversary of the declaration of Sikh independence.

We join with you, your friends, and family in commemorating the historic resolution passed on April 29th, 1986 by the collective Sikh Nation Gathering known as, "Sarbat Khalsa", at Sikhs Political Center, "Akal Takhat", situated in the Holy City of Amritsar, Punjab.

The entire membership extends its very best wishes on this memorable occasion and expresses the hope for continued success.



Given this 29th day of April 2022 at the State Capitol Hartford, Connecticut

> Martin M. S. President Pro Tempore

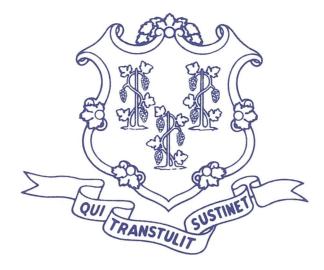
> > Speaker of the House







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Given this 29th day of April 2022 at the State Capitol Hartford, Connecticut

> Martin M. Soncy President Pro Tempore

> > Speaker of the House

Secretary of the State



# U.S SENATOR CHRIS MURPHY WISHES SIKH NATION WHILE THEY COMMEMORATE APRIL 29TH AS - 36TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF SIKH

CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

SENATE OFFICE BUILDING HART 136 WASHINGTON, DC 20510 (202) 224–4041

120 HUYSHOPE AVENUE SUITE 401 HARTFORD, CT 06106 (860) 549-8463

http://murphy.senate.gov

April 29, 2022

Dear Friends:

I would like to extend my best wishes to everyone in the Sikh Community of Connecticut as you celebrate the 554<sup>th</sup> Sikh New Year and Independence Day. For centuries, Sikhs have celebrated their religion's founding by Guru Nanak both in the Punjab transnational region and around the world. I also want to honor the 239<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sikh Flag Day.

The Sikh community has a long and rich cultural history with over 50 million followers worldwide. Members of the Sikh faith value freedom of religion, speech, and expression while standing in solidarity with marginalized and oppressed people around the world. The tapestry we weave as a state and a nation is made more vibrant by the contributions from the more than 500 Sikh families in Connecticut. I want to thank the City of Norwich for organizing today's celebrations and for creating an inclusive and welcoming community for residents of the Sikh faith and all backgrounds to enjoy.

Once again congratulations to all of Connecticut's Sikhs on this 554<sup>th</sup> New Year and 239<sup>th</sup> Sikh Flag Day. Norwich is fortunate to be able to host such a culturally enriching event. I wish you all the best in the future, and I look forward to working hand-in-hand with you for years to come

Sincerely.

Christopher S. Murphy United States Senator



April 4, 2023

To: World Sikh Parliament 19-36 77th East Elmhurst, NY 11370

CC: Swaranjit Singh Khalsa (Coordinator UN-NGO Council)

RE: Vaisakhi

Dear Honorable Members of World Sikh Parliament:

The Party of People and Integrity (PPI) and its members would like to wish the Sikh Nation "Happy Vaisakhi" while they all come together with their families and friends to celebrate this day Globally during the month of April with special Celebrations in Washington DC this year on April 8th 2023.

Throughout history, the journey towards freedom of any community is often marked with great struggles and sacrifices as a result of unparalleled resilience and determination of its people.

PPI and its members recognize the challenges and struggles the Sikhs Community is facing in Sikh Homeland "Punjab" and recognize the April 29th, 1986, resolutions by Sikh Collective gathering (Sarbat Khalsa) as "Sikh Declaration of Independence Day".

PPI and its members share the same hopes and aspirations with Sikhs community. We are confident that by working together, we can address the challenges that face our world today and create a brighter future for our people.

On this important and momentous occasion of Vaisakhi, let us renew our collective commitment to the principles of integrity, democracy, freedom, equality, and justice for all citizens of the world.

We look forward to strengthening our friendship with Sikh Nation.

Sincerely,

Zato Kadambaya

USA Representative of PPI





City Of Norwich

Mayors Office

Peter Albert Nystrom, Mayor

## **PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS, Sikhism originated in the Punjab region of South Asia and Sikhs have overcome massive suppression to create, over several periods, sovereign states in their homeland to demonstrate their desire and ability to rule in a just manner and ensuring dignity and prosperity for all, without regard for caste or creed; and

WHEREAS, Sikhism is the fifth largest independent ethnic religion founded by Guru Nanak in 1469 in the Punjab Region of South Asia and over 700,000 are living in the United States; and

WHEREAS, India has committed genocide against the Sikhs since 1984 in order to crush a lawful and legitimate freedom struggle, in response to which the Sarbat Khalsa, the supreme temporal decision-making body of the Sikhs, resolved on 26 January 1986 to create a sovereign state in Indian-occupied Punjab as the only effective means of exercising the Sikh nation's right of self-determination, which led to the formal Declaration of Independence by its appointed 'Panthic Committee' on 29 April 1986; and

WHEREAS, Sikhs in Punjab and across the world have since that historic Declaration, which spoke of freedom, equality, and social justice to all, made great sacrifices to secure resolution to the Indo-Sikh conflict according to that cherished national goal and we salute the martyrs of our noble freedom struggle; and

WHEREAS, with values nurtured by Sikh faith that include the freedom of religion, speech and expression, we stand with those marginalized and oppressed people of the world who are also struggling for their independence and basic human rights; and

WHEREAS, we applaud the international community's adoption of fundamental human rights as inalienable requirements of the world order, in particular the adoption by the United Nations of Article 1 of the 1966 Covenants on Human Rights which gives pride of place to the right of self-determination as the only guarantee of other human rights.

NOW THEREFORE, I, MAYOR PETER ALBERT NYSTROM AND NORWICH CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM, JOSEPH A. DELUCIA, ON BEHALF OF THE NORWICH CITY COUNCIL AND THE CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF NORWICH, do hereby declare April 29, 2022 as Sikh Declaration of Independence Day.

Dated this Twenty-ninth day of April, 2022

Peter Albert Nystrom

Mayor

Jose<del>ph A. DeLucia</del> President Pro Tem

# WORLD SIKH PARLIAMENT

# ਨਾਨਕਿ ਰਾਜੂ ਚਲਾਇਆ ਸਚੂ ਕੋਟੂ ਸਤਾਣੀ ਨੀਵ ਦੈ

NANAK FOUNDED A STATE, BUILT ON A FORTRESS OF TRUTH
ANG 966 SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI

# Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, Sikhism is the fifth largest independent religion, founded by Guru Nanak Sahib in 1469 based on monotheism, universal truth and equality, which now has more than 35 million followers worldwide, who this year mark the 550th anniversary of the Guru's birth; and

**WHEREAS**, the Sikh people, constituted as a sovereign nation by our Gurus, aspire under the guidance of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji to live according to the spiritual and temporal tenets of our faith, submitting only to the will of Waheguru, the Creator; and

**WHEREAS**, Sikhism originated in the Punjab region of South Asia and Sikhs have overcome massive suppression to create, over several periods, sovereign states in their homeland to demonstrate their desire and ability to rule in a just manner and ensuring dignity and prosperity for all, without regard for caste or creed; and

**WHEREAS**, the Sikh nation has been forcibly denied statehood in its homeland since the arrival of further colonial rule, initially by the British since 1849 and then by the Indian state since 1947, despite our daily prayer seeking restoration of sovereign self-rule; and

WHEREAS, India has committed genocide against the Sikhs since 1984 in order to crush a lawful and legitimate freedom struggle, in response to which the Sarbat Khalsa, the supreme temporal decision-making body of the Sikhs, resolved on 26 January 1986 to create a sovereign state in Indian-occupied Punjab as the only effective means of exercising the Sikh nation's right of self-determination as enshrined in international law and which led to the formal Declaration of Independence by its appointed 'Panthic Committee' on 29 April 1986; and

**WHEREAS**, Sikhs in Punjab and across the world have since that historic Declaration, which spoke of freedom, equality, and social justice to all, made great sacrifices to secure resolution to the Indo-Sikh conflict according to that cherished national goal and we salute the martyrs of our noble freedom struggle; and

WHEREAS, with values nurtured by Sikh faith that include the freedom of religion, speech and expression, we stand in solidarity with those marginalized and oppressed people of the world who are also struggling for their independence and basic human rights and we applaud the international community's adoption of fundamental human rights as inalienable requirements of the world order, in particular the adoption by the United Nations of Article 1 of the 1966 Covenants on Human Rights which gives pride of place to the right of self-determination as the only effective guarantee of other human rights; and

**NOW,THEREFORE The World Sikh Parliament** reaffirms its commitment to our national aspiration of sovereign statehood for our homeland, delivered in accordance with international law, and hereby recognizes

April 29th 2020 as "Sikh Declaration of Independence Day"



(General Secretary)

Hardyal Singh

(General Secretary)

The World Sikh Parliament was formed pursuant to a resolution of the Sarbat Khalsa (national gathering) held in the Sikh homeland in November 2015. It has resolved to pursue the cause of Sikh human rights, both collective and individual, and the internationalise the campaign for Sikh national self-determination.



# Proclamation

Whereas, Sikhism originated in the Punjab region of South Asia and Sikhs have overcome massive suppression to create, over several periods, sovereign states in their homeland to demonstrate their desire and ability to rule in a just manner and ensuring dignity and prosperity for all, without regard for caste or creed; and

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Whereas, with values nurtured by Sikh faith that include the freedom of religion, speech and expression, we stand with those marginalized and oppressed people of the world who are also struggling for their independence and basic human rights; and

Whereas, we applaud the international community's adoption of fundamental human rights as inalienable requirements of the world order, in particular the adoption by the United Nations of Article 1 of the 1966 Covenants on Human Rights which gives pride of place to the right of self-determination as the only guarantee of other human rights.

Therefore, John L. Vieau, Mayor of Chicopee, does hereby proclaim this

29th day of April 2022 as

Sikh Declaration of Independence Day"

in the City of Chicopee.

John L. Vieau, Mayor City of Chicopee, Massachusetts

# Tity of Holyoke Aproclamation

WHEREAS, Sikhism originated in the Punjab region of South Asia and Sikhs have overcome massive suppression to create, over several periods, sovereign states in their homeland to demonstrate their desire and ability to rule in a just manner and ensuring dignity and prosperity for all, without regard for caste or creed; and

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WHEREAS, with values nurtured by the Sikh faith that include the freedom of religion, speech, and expression, we stand with those marginalized and oppressed people of the world who are also struggling for their independence and basic human rights; and

WHEREAS, we applaud the international community's adoption of fundamental human rights as inalienable requirements of the world order, in particular the adoption by the United Nations of Article 1 of the 1966 Covenants on Human Rights which gives pride of place to the right of self-determination as the only guarantee of other human rights.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED THAT I, Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, do hereby declare April 29, 2022 as

# "SIKH DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE DAY"

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the Official Seal of the City of Holyoke to be affixed.

Signed:

Al Garcia, Mayor

# 29 ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ 2022 ਲਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼

ਪਰਮ ਸਤਿਕਾਰਯੋਗ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫ਼ਤਿਹ।।

ਜਗਤ ਦੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ,ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਦੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੁਗਤ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣਵਾਦ ਦੇ ਕਰਮਕਾਂਡੀ ਜਨੇਊ ਨੂੰ ਠੁਕਰਾ ਕੇ ਨਿਰਮਲ,ਨਿਆਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਅਜ਼ਾਦ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਮਜਬੂਤ ਨੀਂਹ ਰੱਖੀ ਸੀ।



ਇਹ ਅਲੌਕਿਕ ਤੇ ਅੰਗਮੀ ਵਰਤਾਰਾ ਸੀ ਜਿਸਦੇ ਚੱਲਦਿਆਂ ਕੌਮੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਰ ਨਿਰੰਤਰ ਜਾਰੀ ਰਹਿਆ।

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਨਗਾਰੇ ਦੀ ਗੂੰਜ ਨੇ ਰਾਜਸੀ ਹੱਕ ਹਕੂਕ ਦਾ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ।

ਜਿਸਦੀ ਲਗਾਤਾਰਤਾ ਅੱਜ ਵੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਤੱਖ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇਖਣ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਵਰਲਡ ਸਿੱਖ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਨੌਰਵਿਚ ਵਿੱਖੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਅਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਘੋਸ਼ਣਾ ਦਿਵਸ ਦੀ 36 ਵੀ ਵਰ੍ਹੇ ਗੰਡ ਨੂੰ ਮਨਾਉਣਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਭਰ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਲਈ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਣ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ।

ਜਿਸਦੀ ਮੈ ਪੰਥ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਸ਼ਲਾਘਾ ਕਰਦਾਂ ਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਰਦਿਕ ਵਧਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ।ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟ ਦੇ ਸਮੂਹ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੋ ਦੂਰਅੰਦੇਸ਼ੀ ,ਅਡੋਲਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਤਾ ਬਖ਼ਸ਼ੀ ਹੈ ਉਸਦੇ ਰਾਹੀ ਅਸੀ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਵਿਰਾਸਤੀ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਦੇਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਗਾਤਾਰ ਅੱਗੇ ਵੱਧ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ ।

ਮੈਨੂੰ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ 29 ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ 2022 ਵਾਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਨੌਰਵਿਚ ਮਯੁਰਲ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਜਾਤੀ ,ਰੰਗ ,ਨਸਲੀ ਭੇਦ-ਭਾਵ ਤੋਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਉਠਕੇ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਅਧਿਕਾਰਾਂ,ਬਰਾਬਰਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਇਨਸਾਫ਼ ਲਈ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ੀਲ ਸ਼ਖ਼ਸੀਅਤਾਂ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਜਸਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲੜਾ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹਨ ਨੂੰ ਯਾਦ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਸ਼ਾਤੀ ਲਈ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ ।

ਇਸਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਭਾਈ ਸਵਰਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਥੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਉੱਦਮ ਸਦਕਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਰਟ ਗੈਲਰੀ ਦੇ ਉਦਘਾਟਨ ਦੀ ਮੈ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਪੰਥ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਆਪ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਧਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਗੁਰੂ ਚਰਨਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ ਲਈ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਸੀ ਇਤਫ਼ਾਕ ਬਖ਼ਸ਼ਣ ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਦਾਸ ਜਗਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਵਾਰਾ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ



# AGENDA – MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH May 2, 2022 7:30 PM

**PRAYER** 

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADOPTION OF MINUTES: April 4, 14 and 18, 2022

**PROCLAMATION:** Sikh Declaration of Independence Day

## PETITION AND COMMUNICATION:

 Explanation of resolutions amending the 2022-23 proposed budget and American Rescue Plan Act allocations

## CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

# CITIZENS COMMENT ON RESOLUTIONS (only on the agenda items)

# NEW BUSINESS-RESOLUTIONS

- 1. Relative to an amendment of the 2022-23 budget to adjust revenue estimates.
- 2. Relative to an amendment of the 2022-23 budget to increase revenues for Public Parking Commission collection activity to be performed by Finance Department and decrease Public Works expenditures for a portion of parking area repairs to be paid by the Public Parking Commission.
- 3. Relative to an amendment of the 2022-23 budget to decrease expenditures for several departments.
- 4. Relative to an amendment of the 2022-23 capital budget.
- 5. Relative to tentative adoption of the preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023.
- 6. Relative to amendment of American Rescue Plan Act allocations.
- 7. Relative to tentative adoption of American Rescue Plan Act Round 2 Allocations.
- 8. Relative to accepting a deed in lieu of foreclosure for 537 Canterbury Tpk.

City Clerk

# Indian residents chide Sikh celebration

Group calls on Norwich leaders, state legislators to revoke proclamations

**BV CLAIRE BESSETTE** 

Day Staff Writer

Norwich — City leaders and state legislators are in the middle of a bitter rift between Sikhs and a group calling itself "Indian American Community of CT" concerning the city's support of an April 29 celebration of Sikh Independence Day.

Since that day, emails, texts, angry phone calls and letters have circulated by Indians demanding that Norwich Mayor Peter Nystrom and the City Council rescind their proclamation declaring April 29 as Sikh Declaration of Independence Day.

Similar demands have been made of state legislators to revoke a General Assembly citation started by state Sen. Cathy Osten, D-Sprague, and signed by the Norwich delegation and state legislative leaders.

A petition on www.change.org asks the Connecticut General Assembly to rescind its citation in support of the Declaration of Sikh Independence Day. The petition had 747 signatures as of Friday af-

Sikh community leaders, including the World Sikh Parliament, have fired back with their own emails, videos, links to articles describing atrocities against Sikhs allegedly supported by the Indian government. A petition started by Norwich Sikh community leader Swaranjit Singh Khalsa on www. change.org asks that U.S. lawmakers, including President Joe Biden, "must allow Sikh history to be celebrated and acknowledged in U.S." That petition had 737 signatures by Friday afternoon.

The Indian American Community of CT claims that the General Assembly and Norwich are ille-

SEE INDIAN PAGE A5



Sports: Xander Schauffele captures Travelers Championship title (Page B1)

MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2022



# Indian group demands city leaders, state legislators rescind Sikh citations

gally interfering with U.S. international affairs. The group accused the World Sikh Parliament, which ran the April 29 event program, of hav-ing ties to Sikh terrorist orga-nizations. Norwich and state leaders have been "misguided by fringe organizations with mefarious intentions," said one email sent by Vikram Bhandari of Wilton and signed only by Indian American Community

The group called the inde pendence celebration of the 1986 declaration of indepen-dence by Sikhs, for an inde-pendent state of Khalistan, "uncalled for recognition of a separatist movement calling

for the breakup of India."

The email contained links to published articles about the 1984 assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by two Sikh bodyguards and the bombing of an Air India passenger jet on June 23, 1985, alleged-

ly by Sikh extremists.
Notably, the email sent
Monday, June 20, to Norwich
Mayor Peter Nystrom and City Council members was not sent to Alderman Singh Khalsa, who is a Sikh. He said he was

who is a Sikh. He said he was not surprised. "They don't like Sikhs, and it's very painful for them to see me as elected official," Khalsa

me as elected official," Khalsa said in response to the slight. Khalsa and other Sikh lead-ers accused the Indian consul-ate in New York of stirring up the controversy in Connecti-cut. Khalsa's email responses contain links to articles decontain links to articles de-"disinformation" campaign against Sikhs and Indian gov-

ernment military actions against Sikhs, including the June 1984 military assault on a Sikh temple, and the widely labeled "Sikh genocide" riots against Sikhs in November 1984 following Indira Gandhi's assassination. Khalsa cited a book that

claims the Air India bombing was planned by the Indian foreign intelligence agency to e Sikhs

Khalsa said Sikhs view the Punjab region as the Sikh homeland occupied by India. Khalsa said the 1986 Sikh Declaration of Independence in Amritsar Punjab was "made in peaceful manner among 500,000 people." He said the April 29 Norwich anniversa-ry celebration likewise was

"Sikh nation seeks peaceful "Sixh nation seeks peacerul resolution with India and just wanted their right of self-de-termination," Khalsa said in an email to The Day last week. On Friday, Khalsa said Sikh

leaders are working to set up a meeting with officials at the U.S. Department of State to file a written complaint against the Indian consulate of New York "and all parties involved in it."

Reactions to the demand by the Indian American Comp nity of CT's request that the citation and city proclamation be revoked are mixed. Norwich Mayor Nystrom

staunchly defended the city proclamation and support for the local Sikh community. Nystrom said more than 25 Sikh families live in Norwich and are peaceful, productive members of the community. He said he has read about violent attacks and political persecution against Sikhs and

Sikhism in India. "We have Sikh residents liv-ing in the city of Norwich who are kind, peace-loving families," Nystrom said. "This is an argument between people that can never be settled, not even by us and our resolutions." On May 24, state Senate Ma-jority Leader Bob Duff, D-Nor-

walk, Deputy Senate Majority Leader Matthew L. Lesser, D-Middletown, and state Sen. Saud Anwar, D-South Windsor, issued a joint letter clarifying their position regarding the citation "perceived as challenging the sovereignty of India. The letter stated the citation mistakenly" included their names as introducers and said they were grateful to the Con-sul General of India for the chance to clarify their position.

"As state senators, we each represent large and diverse In-dian American communities," the letter stated. "We support continuing friendship between the people of India and the residents of Connecticut."

Duff issued a separate letter June 1 saying he did not authorize his signature and was not aware of the citation at the time.

Republican state Rep Doug Dubitsky, R-Chaplin whose district includes Nor wich, wrote in a June 9 letter to state Rep. Harry Arora R-Greenwich, an immigrant from India, that Dubitsky too did not give permission for his name to appear on the ci-tation. But Dubitsky's letter explained that it is common practice and courtesy for a leg-islator to include the names of fellow legislators representing that municipality on celebra-

tory citations.
"When I present a citation

in the Norwich area, I typically ensure that the names of the other Norwich delegation members are on the citations, even if they had no involvement in the subject matter of tion. I likely would have taken that same position," Dubitsky

the citation. It is a common courtesy among legislators," Dubitsky wrote. Dubitsky compared the Sikh-India controversy to an effort several years ago in the state legislature to support the people of Northern Ireland in their fight against British rule. Saying he "truly did not know

who was right and who was

wrong in that conflict," he de-clined to support the move. "If I had been asked in ad-vance about adding my name to the Sikh Independence cita-

> wrote.
> Like Nystrom, Osten strong-ly defended the Sikh citation and said her office sent requests to legislative staffs of all Norwich legislators and Senate leaders Duff, Lesser and Anwar for support of the 36th anniversary of the declaration of Sikh independence. Osten this issue. They think the state government sides. It is not. It's a cit's a legislative docum government action." c.bessette@theday.com

said she has been issuing ci-tations for the past several years for the anniversary, and this was the first time the citation has drawn controversy.

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"I'm not retracting mine,"
Osten said. "I've done this for
the past five or six years. Apparently, this has become a
political issue this year. I'm not disrespecting either side in this issue. They think that this is the state government taking sides. It is not. It's a citation. it's a legislative document, not







