

# 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.

**A SENATE RESOLUTION** condemning the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide.

**WHEREAS**, The Sikh community, which originated in Punjab, India, and began immigrating into the United States over 100 years ago, has played an important role in developing the United States and New Jersey; and

**WHEREAS**, Sikhism is the world's fifth-largest religion with nearly 30 million adherents, including roughly 1,000,000 in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, The Sikh genocide began on November 1, 1984, after the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the capital territory of Delhi and the states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Jammu and Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Maharashtra; and

**WHEREAS**, The Sikh genocide lasted three days and over 30,000 Sikhs were brutally murdered as they were hunted in their homes, where they were hacked and burned alive; and

**WHEREAS**, On April 16, 2015, the California State Assembly unanimously passed Assembly Concurrent Resolution 34, which recognized the systematic and organized killings of Sikhs by the Indian government in Delhi and remembered those who lost their lives during the 1984 Sikh genocide; and

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

**WHEREAS**, Eyewitnesses, journalists, and human rights activists have compiled evidence showing that government and law enforcement officials organized, participated in, and failed to intervene to prevent the killings through direct and indirect means; and

**WHEREAS**, As recently as 2011, mass graves have been discovered in the villages of Hondh Chillar and Pataudi in Haryana, and many more will continue to be discovered in the future with Indian government officials and police flouting impunity; and

**WHEREAS**, The "Widow Colony," the Tilak Vihar neighborhood in New Delhi, still houses thousands of Sikh women, who were forced to bear mass rape and witness the hacking, burning, and murder of their husbands, fathers, and sons, and who are still calling for justice against the perpetrators; and

**WHEREAS**, Many of the survivors of the Sikh genocide eventually immigrated to the United States and established large Sikh communities in places such as Fresno, Yuba City, Stockton, Fremont, Glenrock, Pine Hill, Carteret, New York City, and Philadelphia, among other places; and

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

**WHEREAS**, Recognizing the state-sponsored violence that targeted Sikhs across India in 1984 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 Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The New Jersey Senate condemns the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide.
2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President and Vice-President of the United States, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and every member of Congress elected from this State.

## **STATEMENT**

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

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

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

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

Many of the survivors of the Sikh genocide eventually immigrated to the United States and established large Sikh communities in places such as Fresno, Yuba City, Stockton, Fremont, Glenrock, Pine Hill, Carteret, New York City, and Philadelphia. The Sikh community in the United States and New Jersey has recovered from the material damages of the genocide as they continue to keep the memory of those who were killed alive and will never forget the Sikh genocide.

This resolution recognizes and condemns the state-sponsored violence that targeted Sikhs across India in 1984, an important and historic step towards justice, accountability, and reconciliation, which should be an example to other governments.

[Bill Text: NJ SR142 | 2020-2021 | Regular Session | Introduced | LegiScan](#)