

**SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 118**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 22, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator STEPHEN M. SWEENEY

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

Assemblyman P. CHRISTOPHER TULLY

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblywoman LISA SWAIN

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblyman STERLEY S. STANLEY

District 18 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

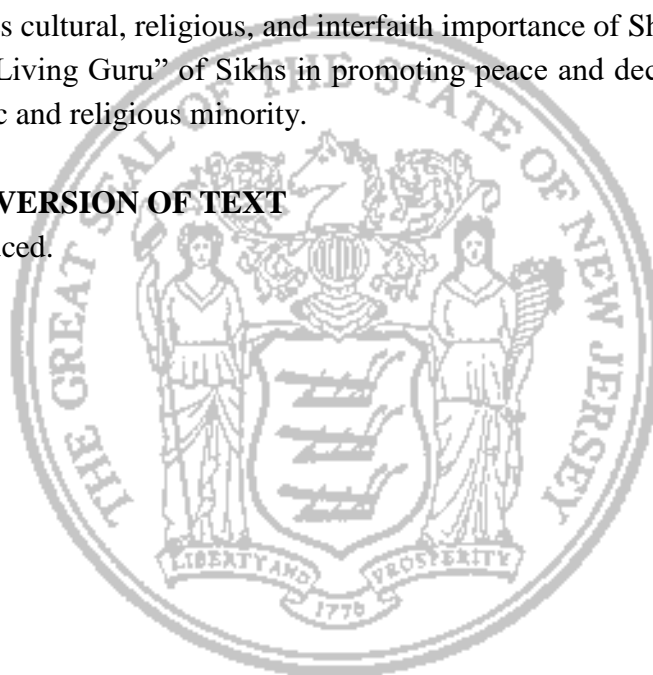
Senator Diegnan, Assemblywomen Murphy and Vainieri Huttie

SYNOPSIS

Recognizes cultural, religious, and interfaith importance of Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as “Living Guru” of Sikhs in promoting peace and declaring Sikhs as distinct ethnic and religious minority.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/21/2021)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** recognizing the cultural, religious,
2 and interfaith importance of Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as “Living
3 Guru” of Sikhs in promoting peace and declaring Sikhs as a
4 distinct ethnic and religious minority.
5
6 **WHEREAS**, Founded by Guru Nanak in 15th Century Punjab, India, the
7 Sikh monotheistic tradition teaches its adherents to practice the
8 universal principles of truthful living, service to humanity, and
9 devotion to God; and
10 **WHEREAS**, The Sikh community began immigrating to the United
11 States in the late 1800s and has played an important role in
12 developing this country and the State of New Jersey while enriching
13 American culture, history, economy, and diversity; and
14 **WHEREAS**, Sikhism is the fifth largest religion in the world with more
15 than 25 million Sikhs worldwide, including more than 750,000 in the
16 United States; and
17 **WHEREAS**, Some of the most notable Sikhs in the United States live in
18 and contribute to the State of New Jersey, including Attorney
19 General Gurbir Grewal, City of Hoboken Mayor Ravinder Bhalla,
20 and Burlington County Freeholder Balvir Singh; and
21 **WHEREAS**, The religion’s emphasis on loving service to humanity also
22 inspires Sikh’s living in New Jersey to make lasting social
23 contributions, such as providing free food to the less fortunate
24 through the annual “Let’s Share a Meal” event in Camden and Jersey
25 City; and
26 **WHEREAS**, The tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji left the world
27 and indicated to the generations ahead to avoid idol worship and
28 recognize the Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the principal scripture of
29 Sikhism, as the “Living and Eleventh Guru” of the Sikh religion; and
30 **WHEREAS**, In a historic judgement delivered on March 29, 2000, the
31 Supreme Court of India declared Guru Granth Sahib Ji as a “Juristic
32 Person,” further justifying Guru Gobind Singh Ji’s declaration of
33 Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the “Living Guru”; and
34 **WHEREAS**, Although Sikhs have made immense contributions
35 throughout history, they have long faced oppression and
36 discrimination throughout the rest of the world; and
37 **WHEREAS**, According to the Sikh religion and history, Sikhs share a
38 unique set of beliefs and practices that are altogether different from
39 other religions; and
40 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey is committed to educating citizens
41 about the world’s religions, the value of religious diversity, tolerance
42 grounded in First Amendment principles, a culture of mutual
43 understanding, and the importance of reducing violence, all of which
44 are consistent with Shri Guru Granth Sahib’s teachings; and
45 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey seeks to further the diversity of its
46 community and afford all residents the opportunity to better
47 understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared

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1 experiences of Sikhs and enforce laws for access to equal opportunity
2 of humans irrespective of their caste, creed, color, and appearance;
3 now, therefore,
4

5 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey (the*
6 *General Assembly concurring):*
7

8 1. The Legislature of the State of New Jersey recognizes the
9 cultural, religious, and interfaith importance of Shri Guru Granth
10 Sahib Ji as “Living Guru” of Sikhs in promoting peace and declaring
11 Sikhs as a distinct ethnic and religious minority.
12

13 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
14 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the
15 Secretary of the Senate to the Governor of the State of New Jersey
16 and the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey.
17

18 STATEMENT 19

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21 This concurrent resolution recognizes the cultural, religious, and
22 interfaith importance of Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as “Living Guru”
23 of Sikhs in promoting peace and declaring Sikhs as a distinct ethnic
24 and religious minority.

25 Sikhism was founded in 15th Century Punjab, India, by Guru
26 Nanak. The Sikh monotheistic tradition teaches its adherents to
27 practice the universal principles of truthful living, service to
28 humanity, and devotion to God. The Sikh community began
29 immigrating to the United States over 100 years ago and has played
30 an important role in developing this country and the State of New
31 Jersey. Notable Sikhs contributing to the State include Attorney
32 General Gurbir Grewal, City of Hoboken Mayor Ravinder Bhalla,
33 and Burlington County Freeholder Balvir Singh. The religion’s
34 emphasis on loving service to humanity also inspires Sikh’s living in
35 New Jersey to make lasting social contributions, such as providing
36 free food to the less fortunate through the annual “Let’s Share a
37 Meal” event in Camden and Jersey City.

38 When the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji left the world,
39 he indicated to the generations ahead to avoid idol worship and
40 recognize the Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the principal scripture of
41 Sikhism, as the “Living and Eleventh Guru” of Sikh religion. In a
42 historic judgement delivered on March 29, 2000, the Supreme Court
43 of India declared Guru Granth Sahib Ji as a “Juristic Person,” further
44 justifying Guru Gobind Singh Ji’s declaration of Shri Guru Granth
45 Sahib Ji as the “Living Guru.”

46 Although Sikhs have made immense contributions throughout
47 history, they have longed faced oppression and discrimination

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1 throughout the rest of the world. Sikh religion and history are
2 extremely distinct and altogether different from other religions and
3 ethnic groups. Therefore, the State of New Jersey finds it is crucial
4 to recognize the Sikh religion and its history in promoting peace
5 while declaring Sikhs as a distinct ethnic and religious minority.