

Celebrating The Contributions And Significance Of The Sikh American Community

WHEREAS, the month of April holds profound significance for the Sikh American community, as it commemorates several pivotal events in Sikh history, including the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism, on April 14, 1469, and the establishment of the Khalsa order by Guru Gobind Singh Ji on the same date in 1699, which promotes a truthful and disciplined way of life, emphasizing service to humanity without discrimination based on caste, color, creed, race, or religion, and fostering the belief in the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Humanity; and

WHEREAS, on April 14, 1699, an initiation ceremony was held to join the Khalsa order, marking a significant milestone in Sikh tradition, and the month of April also hosts the cultural festival of Vaisakhi, celebrating the arrival of spring and the harvest season in Punjab, India, further deepening the cultural roots of the Sikh American community; and

WHEREAS, Sikhs have been an integral part of the United States for over 120 years, with thousands of Sikh Americans contributing to the nation's growth and development through their labor on farms, in lumber mills, mines, and railroads, and today, there are over 25 million Sikhs worldwide, including an estimated 500,000 Sikh Americans and 25,000 Sikhs residing in the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Sikh Americans enrich the social, cultural, and economic vibrancy of the United States, pursuing diverse professions and making significant contributions in various fields, including but not limited to agriculture, information technology, small businesses, the hotel industry, trucking, medicine, and technology, with many also serving honorably as members of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, Sikh Americans exemplify values of faith, service, and respect for all individuals, fostering a culture of mutual understanding and tolerance, and the City of Chicago is committed to promoting religious diversity, educating citizens about different faith traditions, and fostering a community where all residents can better understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared experiences of Sikh Americans; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago recognizes the importance of embracing and celebrating the diversity of its community, and seeks to honor the contributions and heritage of Sikh Americans, thereby promoting a more inclusive and harmonious society;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Chicago, that April be officially recognized as Sikh American Heritage Month, and the City of Chicago hereby celebrates the contributions, heritage, and significance of the Sikh American community, and affirms its commitment to promoting religious diversity, tolerance, and understanding among all its residents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon the official record of the City Council, and that suitable copies be presented to the Sikh American community and other appropriate parties as a symbol of the City of Chicago's appreciation and support.

