

From: Tejpal Singh Bainiwal

Sent: Friday, August 14, 2020 8:00 AM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Sikh American inclusion in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Good morning,

I had the opportunity to testify in front of the commission yesterday Thursday, August 13, but wanted to share a copy of my full testimony.

My name is Tejpal Singh Bainiwal, I am a PhD Candidate at UC Riverside, Board Member of Asian Pacific Islander Americans of Historic Preservation, and I am a Sikh. We all know that Ethnic studies was created to challenge the already existing curriculum and focus on the history of different minority groups in the United States. It's been just over 50 years since the establishment of Ethnic Studies, yet, the Sikh American narrative continues to be undervalued and ignored. Sikhs have been part of the social fabric of California for all but four decades of California history. As a product of the California public school system, I never learned about the contributions of Sikh Americans – about Sikh Americans working on the railroads in the 1900s, about Stockton Gurdwara challenging the California Alien Land Law Act in the 1910s, about a Sikh American challenging discriminatory policies surrounding citizenship in the 1920s, about Sikh Americans challenging white supremacists in the 1930s, about the first Asian American member of Congress being a Sikh American in the 1950s, and so on. We can't continue to ignore the rich history of Sikhs in California, so I, along with thousands of Sikhs across the state, urge the commission to please reconsider the inclusion of Sikhs in California classrooms.

Thank you,

Tejpal

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