

From: Bhajneet Singh

Sent: Friday, August 14, 2020 6:35 AM

To: Ethnic Studies

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

Hello,

I was not allowed time to speak at the meeting, so see below for a copy of my testimony for the IQC meeting held on Thursday August 13th 2020. Agenda item 2.A.

My name is Bhajneet Singh and I am a Sikh from La Canada, Southern California. I went through the school system and am a parent to three children. Half of the 500,000 Sikhs in the US are estimated to live in California, and Sikhs have been an integral part of this state's social fabric for over 125 years. The first Sikh Gurdwara, or house of worship, in the US was founded in Stockton, California, in 1912 and still welcomes worshippers and visitors. Many notable Sikh Americans have ties to California. Dalip Singh Saund, the first Asian American to serve in Congress who identified as Sikh, served California's 29th congressional district from 1957 to 1963. These contributions deserve to be included in the curriculum, and not erased from history. The emailed petition, signed by 1220 Sikh community members in California, underscores this.

The email petition submitted by the Sikh Coalition and the Jakara Movement, signed by 1220 Sikh community members, supports more meaningful inclusion of Sikhism in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, [through a lesson plan](#) which teachers can use to teach about the positive and rich contributions by Sikhs in California over the past 125 years. The Sikh American experience should not be reduced to a narrative which only portrays the community through the lens of victimization post 9/11. It is clear that the IQC is willing to take this approach given the recent commitment to include lesson plans on the Pacific Islander experience and Arab American Studies. The Sikh community's requests should not continue to be ignored.

Thanks!

Bhajneet Singh