

American Sikh Caucus Committee

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Hon. David G. Vlado,

Hon. Mary Gay Scanlon,

Co-Chairs American Sikh Congressional Caucus.

Dear Co-Chairs,

On behalf of Sikh Caucus Committee, draw your attention to a troubling development that undermines the fundamental principles of religious freedom, and the shared heritage of the Sikh community. On September 12, 2025, the Government of India issued an advisory denying permission for Indian Sikh pilgrims to travel to Nankana Sahib in Pakistan for the upcoming 556th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. This decision, cited on grounds of "prevailing security concerns," effectively bars thousands of devotees from visiting the birthplace of their spiritual leader, a sacred site of profound historical and religious significance.

Nankana Sahib, located in present-day Pakistan, where Guru Nanak spent his formative years imparting teachings of equality, peace, and devotion to the divine. For generations, Sikh pilgrims from India have been granted access to this holy site under bilateral protocols between India and Pakistan. This tradition fosters interfaith harmony and human connection across borders. The suspension of these pilgrimages, amid India-Pakistan tensions, represents an infringement on religious liberties and contravenes international norms, including those in the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which protect the freedom to manifest one's religion.

As Co-Chairs of the Congressional Sikh Caucus, you have championed Sikh rights, religious freedom, and protections against transnational repression. Your leadership has advanced legislation and diplomatic efforts to safeguard Sikh Americans and promote equitable treatment worldwide. I respectfully urge you to:

1. Issue a bipartisan statement condemning the denial of pilgrimage permissions and calling on the U.S. Department of State to engage India to expedite approvals for safe access.
2. Request the U.S. Ambassador to India to raise this issue, emphasizing America's commitment to religious freedom in bilateral relations.
3. Introduce or co-sponsor resolutions affirming the right of religious minorities to access sacred sites, urging India and Pakistan to uphold pilgrimage protocols

Thank you for your dedication to justice, equality, and the Sikh ethos. I await your response and actions on this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

Pritpal Singh

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