



The Sikh Coalition has drafted model resolution / proclamation language that you can use to ask your local, county, state, and federal government officials to stand in solidarity with the #FarmersProtest. You can locate the contact information of your elected officials by visiting <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>.

This draft language is inspired by the Seattle City Council who, in partnership with the Washington Sikh community, passed a resolution in support of the #FarmersProtest on December 14, 2020.

The goal of a resolution / proclamation is to raise awareness about the #FarmersProtest and allow other government officials to express their support in a public way. Each resolution / proclamation also serves an official record to signal to India that the United States is watching the response to these protests and cares about this issue.

If your government official agrees to introduce the resolution / proclamation, we encourage you to invite a group of other Sikh community members to attend the meeting for a vote (virtually or in keeping with pandemic safety guidance in your area). This meeting will be the community's opportunity to share a few brief words about the protests in India and thank the government official(s) for their support. We encourage you to take pictures or screenshots of the event. Please forward these to advocacy@sikhcoalition.org, and we will be sure to highlight them on our social media.

Please feel free to adapt this language as needed. If you would like additional resources to share with your council members, state legislators, governors, and U.S. members of Congress to help inform them on the #FarmersProtest please contact advocacy@sikhcoalition.org.

Please replace <JURISDICTION> with your city, county, or state's name before sharing it with the elected official's office. Draft language begins on the next page.



A RESOLUTION expressing solidarity with farmers peacefully protesting against the passage of farming bills in India and in support of affected members of <JURISDICTION>'s South Asian community.

WHEREAS, the <JURISDICTION> understands and respects the contributions of farmers, in India and across the world, in feeding nations and fostering trade; and

WHEREAS, the <JURISDICTION> is home to individuals who have family who are farmers in their ancestral countries; and

WHEREAS, agriculture is the [primary source of livelihood](#) for [58% of India's population](#), with 85 percent of farmers owning less than five acres

WHEREAS, India, because of its farmers, is the world's [largest producer](#) of milk, pulses, and jute, and the second largest producer of rice, wheat, sugarcane, groundnut, vegetables, fruit, and cotton; and

WHEREAS, India's anti-farmer policies, debt, and a deteriorating financial status have led to [363,726 farmers and farm laborers committing suicide](#) between 1995 and 2019; and

WHEREAS, inequitable agricultural policies have driven many farmers to try and earn a living abroad, including in the United States, to support their families back home; and

WHEREAS, a respect for the rights of freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, and a thriving civil society are core components of a functioning democracy; and

WHEREAS, the Indian government proposed and passed [bills](#) in September 2020 which deregulate the agriculture sector and, by removing significant [protections](#) for farmers and price protections for consumers, ultimately give corporations unprecedented control over India's food supply; and

WHEREAS, these bills have disparate impacts on specific states and classes of India's religious and caste communities; and

WHEREAS, most Sikhs live in Punjab, India and most Punjabi Sikhs are owners and laborers on agricultural lands and will be grossly affected by the laws like those in Haryana and other states; and

WHEREAS, India's Dalit laborers continue to suffer from governmental oppression as well as abuse and harassment within farming communities, many of which have deeply embedded casteism; and



WHEREAS, these laws set off protests across India, particularly in, but not limited to, in the states of Punjab and Haryana, and resulted in up to a million farmers protesting outside the capital city of New Delhi since November 2020; and

WHEREAS, peaceful protestors have been met with tear gas, water cannons, barricades, baton attacks, or other forms of violence by Indian police and government forces on multiple distinct occasions, including [late November 2020](#) and [late January 2021](#), where at least one protestor died and several hundred were injured; and

WHEREAS, at least one hundred protestors have died due to the harsh conditions under which they protest yet they remain resolute in peaceful demonstrations to repeal the laws on agricultural reform; and

WHEREAS, the government of India--ranked 142nd on the [global press freedom index](#)--has engaged in a pattern of deliberately suppressing freedom of speech and the press, including by [shutting down the internet](#) in key locations during protests and [arresting journalists](#); and

WHEREAS, the Indian government and its intelligence services are [suppressing and intimidating](#) supporters and aid organizations through issuing indiscriminate and vague legal notices, auditing financials, and even arresting individuals on wrongful charges; and

WHEREAS, despite the fact that tech platforms like Twitter and Facebook have a responsibility to protect vulnerable journalists, human rights defenders, and the millions who use their platforms, and an obligation to allow communities to share their stories and histories, India's government has engaged in a pattern of [threatening and cajoling them](#) to blatantly restrict free speech online; and

WHEREAS, farmers have the right to demonstrate peacefully and the **<JURISDICTION>** condemns any government brutality and failures to protect demonstrators from violence; and

WHEREAS, India is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights obligating the country to respect the rights to peaceful protest and food; and

WHEREAS, the Indian government must denounce and should not tolerate threats made against farmers by [politicians](#), [nationalist leaders](#), and [the general public](#) inciting violence and even ominous warnings of a [repetition](#) of the 1984 anti-Sikh pogroms led by Indian government , as such threats can and have led to deadly violence against protestors during the course of other peaceful protests; and



WHEREAS, numerous rallies have recently taken place [across the United States and around the world](#) to raise awareness of the anti-democratic responses of the Indian government against the peaceful protestors; and

WHEREAS, members of the [United States Congress](#) and the [Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission](#) have expressed concern about India's anti-democratic response to peaceful protestors; and

WHEREAS, other world leaders from the [United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada](#) have condemned the actions of the Indian government in response to the farmers protests.

WHEREAS, the <JURISDICTION> stands with diverse communities whose families have faced hardship abroad; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The <JURISDICTION> stands in solidarity with the farmers and their families who have been directly affected by the economic and human rights exploitation of India's farmers.
2. The <JURISDICTION> objects to any retaliation, or police brutality against the farmers in India who are assembling for peaceful protests.
3. The <JURISDICTION> objects to the suppression of fundamental freedoms such as freedom of speech, press, and assembly--including by internet shutdowns.
4. The <JURISDICTION> requests that the Indian government provide a path for its people to have constructive dialogue in accordance with democratic principles and avert further loss of life.
5. The <JURISDICTION> calls upon the Indian government to provide Non-governmental organizations access to ensure transparency and protect the rights of peaceful protestors.