



THE  
SIKH COALITION

# 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW



# 2025 SNAPSHOT

**180+**

**REQUESTS FOR  
LEGAL  
ASSISTANCE  
FIELD BY  
OUR  
ATTORNEYS**

**2,500+**

**SANGAT  
MEMBERS  
ENGAGED ON  
IMMIGRATION  
KNOW YOUR  
RIGHTS**

**50+**

**CONFERENCES  
AND OTHER  
GATHERINGS  
FEATURING OUR  
STAFF**

**60+**

**PIECES OF  
LEGISLATION  
ANALYZED,  
CONSULTED ON,  
AND ENDORSED  
OR OPPOSED**

**90+**

**SIKH EXPERTS  
JOIN NEW  
SIKH SPEAKERS  
NETWORK**

# WAHEGURU JI KA KHALSA, WAHEGURU JI KI FATEH!

Despite all the new challenges that we have faced this year, from fighting dangerous narratives about our sangat to policies that threaten the most vulnerable among us, the Sikh Coalition continued to scale our legal, advocacy, community development, education, and media engagement work on behalf of the panth. We are proud of all we accomplished working with and through sangat across the country, and we are glad to detail some of these shared achievements in this year-end report.

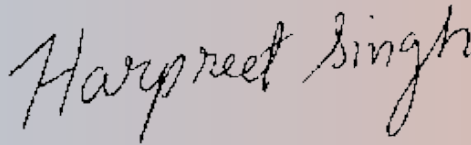
Next year, we will commemorate our 25th anniversary. While our two-and-a-half decades of work has secured immense progress to defend and expand the civil rights of Sikh Americans, we must be clear-eyed about attempts to roll back this progress, as well as have a vision of how to further it. Our team is more dedicated than ever to protecting hard-fought gains—but our ability to do so hinges on your continued dasvandh and partnership.

Thank you, as ever, for continuing to stand alongside us this year. **It is our privilege to continue fighting for your right to practice your faith fearlessly.**

Chardi Kala,



Harman Singh  
Executive Director



Harpreet Singh  
Executive Board Co-Chair



Sukhmani Kaur Kocher  
Executive Board Co-Chair

# FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE FOR HARPAL SINGH

On August 4, Harpal Singh ji, a 70-year-old member of the Sikh community in North Hollywood, California, was brutally assaulted near the Sikh Gurdwara of LA.

The Sikh Coalition was retained by Harpal ji's family to provide legal aid and support. On August 11, we facilitated a community press conference featuring Harpal ji's family, elected officials, and allies that was attended by numerous local media outlets. Less than 24 hours later, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) announced that they had arrested a suspect, but that they were not considering hate crime charges.



Believing that it was impossible to rule out hate as a factor given that Harpal ji never had a full interview with the LAPD before falling unconscious, we pressed further. First, we sent a comprehensive letter to the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office (LADAO) outlining our arguments around potential bias motives. Then, we rallied 20 California gurdwaras and 40 civil rights organizations to similarly call for a full investigation. And finally, to keep media attention on the case, we also assisted in organizing a local seva event alongside Harpal ji's family, the gurdwara, Khalsa Aid USA, and other Sikh organizations.

As of the time of writing, the case against Harpal ji's alleged attacker is still in progress. While LADAO has expressed that they do not believe there is enough evidence to bring a hate crime charge yet, we did secure a commitment from them to interview Harpal ji when he regains consciousness and bring new charges if warranted.

# NEW THREATS TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR SIKHS IN THE U.S. MILITARY

In September of this year, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth gave a speech in which he shared his intentions to significantly tighten policies around who is allowed a beard in the U.S. military. The Department of Defense then released a memo directing each branch of the military to develop new accommodation policies in line with their guidance. The memo outlined several concerning points specific to religious beard accommodations, including:

- A call to return specifically to “pre-2010” standards, which was the year that the first historic accommodations were granted to two Sikh soldiers in the U.S. Army;
- Instructions to limit accommodations to only “non-deployable roles,” without a definition of what kinds of job titles and responsibilities would and wouldn’t be included; and
- Restrictions on how recruits could request an accommodation before formally joining the military.

The memo gave the heads of each military branch 60 days to produce new policies in line with this guidance.

At the time of writing, the Sikh Coalition remains in near-constant communication with current and previous legal clients, our co-counsels, members of Congress, and interfaith organizations on this issue. While we have not filed a lawsuit yet, we are prepared to do so if necessary; we are also pursuing direct outreach to policymakers. Ultimately, we continue to pursue this work because we believe that no one should have to choose between their career and their religion. We also recognize that how people who keep articles of faith are treated by the Department of Defense—our nation’s largest employer—will affect Sikhs throughout the public and private sectors.

# OUR LEGAL TEAM SERVING THE SANGAT

The Sikh Coalition remains the nation's leading source of free, expert legal aid for sangat members who face hate or discrimination on the basis of their Sikh identity. As of November, the Sikh Coalition has fielded more than 180 legal intakes in 2025, most of which become either active cases or referrals.



## STANDING FOR SIKHS' RIGHTS AGAINST THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and United States Department of Justice are still actively working on our eight clients' charges of discrimination from 2023, when the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation forced bearded peace officers, including those who previously held accommodations, to shave or face disciplinary action up to and including termination.



## FIGHTING FOR SIKH PILOT'S RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION TO BE ACCEPTED BY AIRLINE

A Sikh pilot retained the Sikh Coalition when his religious accommodation to keep his kesh was denied due to safety concerns, despite the airline company that he works for not making good faith efforts to respect his religious beliefs.

In October, the Sikh Coalition filed a complaint with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights to urge their intervention in this case.

# PROTECTING SIKH PRISONERS' RIGHTS

Our legal team has continued to fight for incarcerated Sikh individuals, whose religious rights are too often violated by state and federal prison systems.

Alongside co-counsels from the Religious Freedom Clinic at Harvard Law School, and Roshan Shah of Shah Law Group, the Sikh Coalition currently represents two former inmates of the Federal Correctional Institution at Fort Dix in New Jersey. Our first client, Prabhjot Singh, was targeted by a group of federal corrections officers during his 48-month sentence; among other abuses, they destroyed his dastaar by trampling it under their boots and smearing it with spilled paint.

Our second client, Jasinder Singh, did not have his religious dietary restrictions accommodated despite many requests—forcing him to spend thousands of dollars of his own money to purchase commissary food that provided little to no nutrition. Both cases remain ongoing at the time of writing.

Also this year, the Sikh Coalition signed two amicus briefs in cases where the prisoners' religious rights were violated during their incarceration: *Owens v. Schuette* and *Landor v. Louisiana*. While these two cases do not involve Sikh prisoners, both plaintiffs faced religious discrimination during incarceration, either by not having their dietary restrictions accommodated or by being forcibly shaven.

We will continue this work because we believe all individuals are entitled to the protection of their rights.

# INCREASE IN HELPING INDIVIDUALS WITH KIRPAN ACCOMMODATIONS

The Sikh Coalition fielded an increased number of kirpan cases this year.

In one case, an Amritdhari Sikh starting medical school was initially barred from participating in his orientation, and was told he would not be allowed to attend any meetings or classes unless he left his kirpan with security while on campus. The Sikh Coalition provided this young Singh with resources about the kirpan to share with university officials, as well as additional kirpans to show alongside his own. As a result of this work—as well as a formal demand letter and a series of conversations between university staff and our attorneys—he now has a full accommodation to maintain his kirpan while on campus.

Also this year, our legal team successfully represented four students in California and one student in Georgia seeking kirpan accommodations in their school settings.

The Sikh Coalition continues to work with public and private institutions across the country to ensure that sangat members are able to maintain kirpans by giving them tools to seek accommodations, informing them of their rights, and stepping in to help when needed. Through our efforts, we have seen the U.S. government, public schools and universities, sports stadiums, hospitals, major corporations, public transportation, retail establishments, and more consistently accommodate this article of faith.

“ I was put in a situation where I could not attend school for about a week because I was not allowed to wear my kirpan in the building.

The Sikh Coalition helped me by not making me choose between either continuing my education or practicing my religion.

~ Sikh Coalition Client

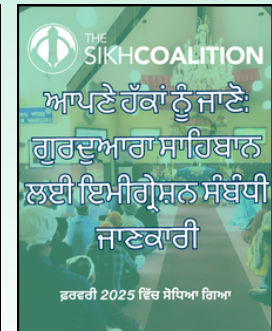
# EXPANDING OUR IMMIGRATION WORK

View all our resources in English  
and Punjabi: [thesikh.co/immigration](https://thesikh.co/immigration)

The Sikh Coalition began 2025 by creating “Know Your Rights” (KYR) information and Community FAQs in multiple formats in both English and Punjabi. Then, we hosted an English/Punjabi webinar with Sikh legal experts, and also took our materials directly to sangats—including visits to gurdwaras in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Indiana and virtual sessions for gurdwaras in New York, Georgia, Michigan, and Washington.

Our efforts also involved work on specific policies and cases:

- We coordinated with Democracy Forward as they challenged the U.S. government for seeking to conduct immigration raids at houses of worship. Our involvement led to Gurdwara Sahib West Sacramento joining this landmark lawsuit.
- When a dozen community members were rapidly arrested and detained in one city—allegedly over criminal activity, though charges were never brought—we provided support with detention visits and translation services, consulted attorneys to discuss possible lawsuits over unethical practices, and offered community KYR trainings.
- And finally, we fought for Bibi Harjit Kaur, a 73-year-old grandmother who was held by ICE under intolerable conditions before her deportation to India. We worked closely with Bibi ji’s lawyer and advocates to push for her release, and called for the broader sangat to join us in a wider opposition to the increasingly immoral immigration enforcement regime in our country.

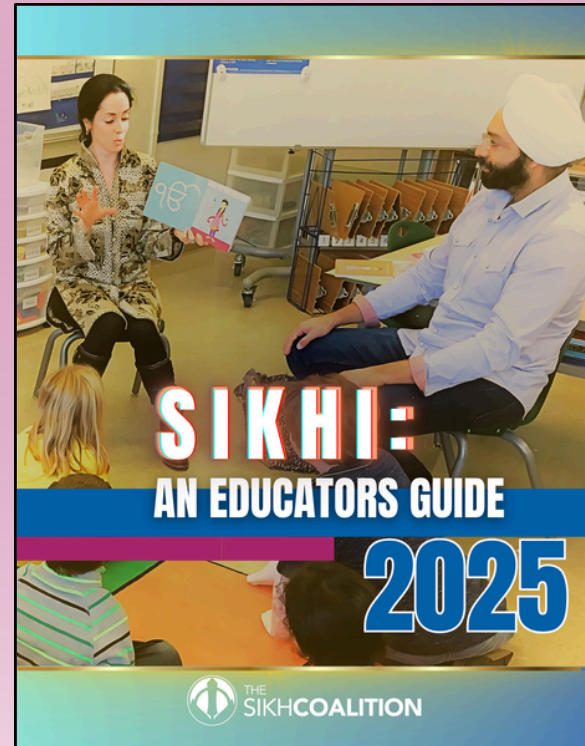


# NEW TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS

## UPDATED EDUCATORS GUIDE

In February, the Sikh Coalition launched our newest edition of *Sikhi: An Educator's Guide*. This guide walks educators through constitutionally appropriate ways to bring learning about Sikhs and Sikhi into classrooms; an overview of issues faced by Sikh children in schools and how teachers can help students respond; and background and reference information on the Sikh community, faith, and traditions.

Over the summer, we also updated our template accommodation letters to help families with students who maintain articles of faith prepare for the 2025-2026 school year. These letters can help secure accommodations for a child's beard, dastar, or kirpan, and versions are available specifically for the context of sports and school uniforms.



View all of these resources and more  
of our educational materials at  
[www.sikhcoalition.org](http://www.sikhcoalition.org)

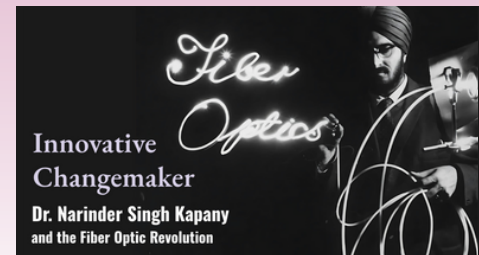
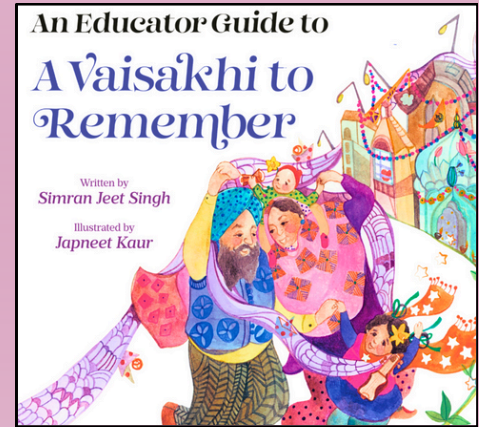
# LESSON PLANS

The Sikh Coalition also launched a variety of new lesson plans this year:

**A Vaisakhi to Remember:** In partnership with author Dr. Simran Jeet Singh and publisher Penguin Random House, we created a lesson plan for the children’s book *A Vaisakhi to Remember*. This resource provides young students with the opportunity to explore Punjabi terms, the role of community, and how traditions are formed and sustained—even when immigrating to a new home.

**On the Road: Sikh American Truck Drivers:** This lesson plan for high school-aged students was a collaboration between the Asian American Education Project and the Sikh Coalition. Punjabi and Sikh American truck drivers account for 20 percent of our country’s trucking industry, and this resource will help students explore the unique history of and challenges faced by these essential employees.

**Innovative Changemaker:** Focusing on the life and work of “the father of fiber optics,” Dr. Narinder Singh Kapany, the Sikh Coalition co-created this lesson plan with Dr. Harpreet Kaur Dhir. Through readings, art projects, and other activities, high school-aged students can learn about Dr. Kapany’s biography, work in fiber optics, and his lasting legacy in the fields of science, technology, art, and more.



# FATEH! OUR 20<sup>TH</sup> STATE STANDARDS VICTORY

In the final weeks of 2024, the Alabama State Board of Education adopted new social studies standards that will include Sikhi as a part of their K-12 curriculum. This made Alabama the 20th state to add Sikhi into their standards—a major milestone for our 15-year campaign! Our advocacy efforts to achieve this goal started in November of 2023, and included engaging with the Alabama Department of Education, sending a recorded Sikh Awareness Presentation for the Social Studies Standards Review Committee, and facilitating a gurdwara letter of support signed by all three gurdwarae in Alabama.

2025 saw additional state standards fights (see next page on Oklahoma). Additionally, as we look towards the last few months of the year, we are preparing to engage in Iowa, New York, and Texas's state standards revision processes to ensure new or continued inclusion of Sikhi in those states.

## STATE-BY-STATE PROGRESS

2009: New Jersey

2010: Texas

2014: New York

2016: California, Idaho

2018: Arizona, Colorado

2017: Tennessee

2019: Nebraska, N. Dakota, Oklahoma

2019: Michigan

2020: Kansas, Indiana

2022: Mississippi, Utah

2023: Connecticut, Virginia

2024: Minnesota, Alabama

HELP US REACH EVEN MORE STATES IN 2026!

# ADVOCATING AGAINST CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM IN CLASSROOMS

This year, the Sikh Coalition became a founding member of the Coalition for Religious Freedom in Public Schools, working to oppose efforts to force Christian Nationalism into classrooms across the country.

## OKLAHOMA

In April, we and our partners repeatedly raised concerns about the elevation of Christianity above other religions in the new state standards being proposed by Oklahoma’s Board of Education (BoE). We coordinated a formal sign-on letter to the BoE, joined by more than 30 religious and nonreligious organizations opposing the proposed standards; spoke to reporters about the issue; and more. Even though these standards in Oklahoma passed and minimal Sikh inclusion was maintained, we will continue to stand for teaching about all religions in a constitutionally-appropriate way and finding new ways to ensure that Sikhi and other faith traditions are not being eclipsed by very specific teachings of Christianity.



## TEXAS

Early this year, we worked with members of the Texas sangat to oppose SB 10, which mandates the display of the Christian Ten Commandments in the state’s K-12 public school classrooms. We and our allies argued that displaying religious teachings in public schools amounts to the government unconstitutionally elevating one religion over others.

Our work included mobilizing parents for testimony, speaking at a teach-in, informing reporters, and reaching out to legislators. Unfortunately, in May, SB 10 became law—but in July, a group of civil rights organizations filed a lawsuit against specific Texas school districts to try to stop them from displaying the Ten Commandments. We remain in contact with the groups who brought the lawsuit and will monitor for ways to engage.

# FIGHTING OFFENSIVE AND HARMFUL FRAMING OF SIKHS IN MODEL SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

In March, the Sikh Coalition urged sangat members nationwide to take action against model social studies standards that call for public school students to learn about “Sikh terror” in their 10th grade social studies classrooms. These model standards, called “American Birthright,” are written and promoted by an advocacy group called the Civics Alliance. Rather than following state-specific and community-informed processes like the Sikh Coalition and other advocacy groups do, the Civics Alliance works to impose their standards through state legislation. The Sikh Coalition engaged in public debate with the Civics Alliance about our competing views on state education policies and Sikh representation.

Of note, the Civics Alliance’s attempt to implement American Birthright in Connecticut’s state social studies standards failed to advance in May. We remain vigilant against other such efforts to overrule local control of standards and spread harmful misinformation about our community in classrooms.

## OUR ADVOCACY AGAINST “AMERICAN BIRTHRIGHT”

 **13,000+**

Messages sent by sangat members in a nationwide targeted action campaign to specific state legislators urging them not to support American Birthright.

 **45+**

Signatories from Sikh organizations, SSAs, gurdwarae, and Sikh academics signed onto an open letter to the Civics Alliance.

# SHARING OUR RESOURCES WITH EDUCATORS

In 2025, the Sikh Coalition education and community development teams continued to offer Sikh Awareness Presentations, curriculum consultations, and lesson plan trainings—all to help educators better understand how to teach about Sikhs and Sikhi in their classrooms. In addition to connecting with teachers individually, our team attended multiple educational conferences across the country, giving presentations and sharing resources.

- At the **North Carolina** Council for the Social Studies conference, Education Advisory Committee Member Deepjyot Sidhu presented at a session titled “Creating Inclusive Classrooms: Empowering Sikh Students and Beyond.”
- Senior Education Manager Savleen Singh tabled at the Annual American Sociological Association Conference in Chicago, **Illinois**, handing out our Educator’s Guide and lesson plans to attendees.
- Attending the National Religious Freedom in Public Schools Summit in Dallas, **Texas**, Senior Education Manager Savleen Singh gave a speech titled “From Defense to Offense: Advocacy to Expand Religious Freedom in Public Schools.” Savleen’s remarks focused on what it means to have curricula that reflects all communities and how to equip teachers with the tools they need to accurately teach about Sikhi.
- Finally, the Sikh Coalition connected with educators at the annual meetings of both the **Connecticut** Council of Social Studies as well as the **New Jersey** Council of Social Studies. The Connecticut outreach was led by high school students from the local sangat, while Managing Director of Education and Community Development Rucha Kaur engaged with New Jersey educators.



# ADVOCACY WORK ON CAPITOL HILL

*The Sikh Coalition has analyzed, consulted on, and/or formally endorsed or opposed more than 30 pieces of federal legislation so far in 2025.*

## TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

We provided substantive feedback on federal legislation to combat transnational repression, including the bipartisan and bicameral Transnational Repression Policy Act as well as the Stop Transnational Repression Act.

## HATE CRIME PREVENTION

We launched a slate of policy actions for Congress to mark the 24-year anniversary of the murder of Balbir Singh Sodhi, including endorsing three key bills: the Improving Reporting to Prevent Hate Act, the Stop Hate Crimes Act, and the Disarm Hate Act.

## FIGHTING BAD BILLS

We created advocacy tools for sangat members to oppose harmful legislation, including the Laken Riley Act and the SAVE Act; of note, the SAVE Act ultimately failed to advance in the U.S. Senate.

## ICE OVERSIGHT

We endorsed the VISIBLE Act, a measure to ban ICE agents from conducting immigration raids and other activities without identifying themselves.

## EXPLORING NEW TOPICS

We expanded into new subject areas including forced arbitration, judicial vacancies, and various democracy reform measures.

# FURTHER FEDERAL POLICY ENGAGEMENT

*The Sikh Coalition continues to engage in federal policy conversations despite the challenges of the new administration.*

## RAISING QUESTIONS ON NOMINEES

We engaged congressional offices to submit questions for nomination hearings for several administration officials, including Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, Secretary of Education Linda McMahon, Equal Employment Opportunity Commissioners Andrea Lucas and Brittany Panuccio, and others.

## STANDING FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

We opposed the rollback of anti-discrimination policies within executive branch departments, often working alongside allied organizations. Additionally, when the Department of Education published guidance falsely claiming that programs and offices around diversity, equity, and inclusion were discriminatory, we wrote our own guidance (in English and Punjabi) for teachers and parents to explain how efforts to serve and celebrate Sikh students in our schools are legal and beneficial.

## TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

Our staff attended two closed discussions at the State Department, where we briefed policymakers about transnational repression concerns; we also coordinated an organizational letter with 10 partners urging Secretary of State Rubio to designate India as a Country of Particular Concern for religious freedom. Additionally, our submitted question on this topic was asked and answered by an expert witness during a hearing of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.

# WORKING TO PREVENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SIKH TRUCKERS

In May, the Department of Transportation (DOT) issued new rules around how truckers can be removed from the roads if they are not proficient at speaking English. While the Sikh Coalition agrees that all truckers need a baseline understanding of English to drive safely, we have specific concerns about these rules, including making sure that English tests are fair and standardized, and that truckers can challenge a wrongful citation. Additionally, in September, the Trump Administration implemented a new rule to ban many non-citizens from obtaining Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDLs).

In response to these changing policies, the Sikh Coalition has:

- Elevated our civil rights concerns to DOT, and filed a FOIA request for redacted parts of the English testing guidance;
- Updated our “Know Your Rights” resources for truckers, including English and Punjabi flyers and voice notes;
- Held legal clinics for truckers at multiple gurdwaras;
- Provided sangat members with templates to submit public comments on the CDL rule; and
- Co-authored an amicus brief with Asian Law Caucus for a lawsuit launched against the CDL rule.



View all of our resources for truckers:  
[thesikh.co/truckers](https://thesikh.co/truckers)

# SB 509: FIGHTING TO PROTECT THE CALIFORNIA SANGAT FROM TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

Senate Bill 509 was a California bill to establish a specialized training on transnational repression for state and local law enforcement. Despite passing both chambers of the legislature with bipartisan support, SB 509 was vetoed by Governor Newsom in October.

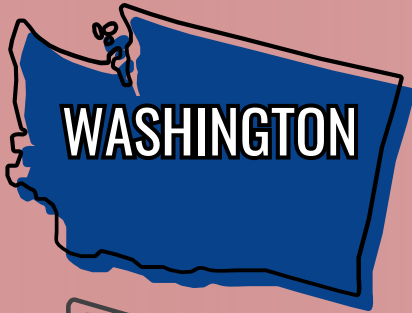
The Sikh Coalition consulted on the bill's language, met with numerous legislative offices to advocate for it, and testified in support of it multiple times. We also raised the Sikh voice on the issue: Hundreds of sangat members testified at committee hearings because of our tabling and action alerts, and more than 4,000 emails and 750 phone calls were sent to the Legislature and Governor Newsom with our advocacy tools. Finally, we convened more than 50 gurdwaras for a sign-on letter, shaped media coverage around the issue by engaging reporters, and recruited expert voices to weigh in on the bill's provisions throughout the advocacy process.

We are deeply thankful to SB 509's sponsors—State Senator Anna M. Caballero, Assemblymember Dr. Jasmeet Kaur Bains, and Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria—as well as our Sikh and non-Sikh organizational partners. We are currently in touch with California authorities to learn more about and strengthen a separate transnational repression training developed as a result of the sangat's fearless advocacy around SB 509.



## ADDITIONAL STATE ADVOCACY ACROSS THE NATION

*The Sikh Coalition continues to advocate for laws and policies in states across the nation, working closely with sangat members to elevate the Sikh voice in these conversations.*



**Washington** state saw Senate Bill (SB) 5427 create a hate crimes hotline, which the state began piloting in three counties in July, and SB 5917 make hateful vandalism of public property a hate crime. These successes were made possible in part by on-the-ground collaboration between the Sikh Coalition and local sangat: In February of 2024, we had led a civic engagement training for more than 25 young Sikh advocates and then accompanied them to an advocacy day at the capitol in Olympia.

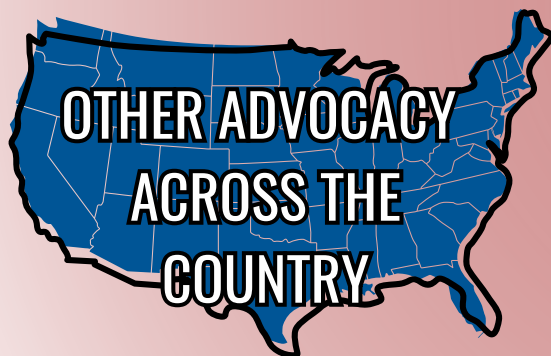
We are also getting involved in the implementation of House Bill (HB) 1232—a bill to strengthen oversight on immigration detention centers—given our work fighting for detained Sikhs’ rights and reports of abuses at a large center in Tacoma that holds many Sikhs.



In **California**, the Sikh Coalition led the charge on SB 509; see previous page for details. We also consulted on Assembly Bill (AB) 268—a bill to designate Diwali as a state holiday, which after our edits also includes Bandi Chhor Divas—and coordinated with Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu partners to oppose AB 715, which would have advanced a damaging definition of antisemitism in California schools and chilled any criticism of foreign governments in classroom conversations.



In February, the Sikh Coalition joined the **New York**-based REACH Coalition for an advocacy day in Albany. Sangat advocates, led by our staff, joined a press conference and conducted legislative office meetings to support S3334/A4638, which would advance AANHPI curriculum in New York schools. Ultimately, in June, a related set of bills (A8463E/S7855E, which will create a survey of New York’s K-12 public schools to determine the need for this kind of inclusive curricula) passed with REACH’s support. Outside of the education space, the Sikh Coalition also began working with partners on a bill prohibiting caste discrimination, which we intend to pick up next year.



- Facilitated multiple community members plus our own staff and board delivering testimony in support of an inclusive curriculum fund bill in **Massachusetts**.
- Mobilized community members to successfully urge **North Carolina** Governor Josh Stein to veto two harmful anti-Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion bills, and pursued work on similar bills in **Ohio**.
- Engaged **Oklahoma** and **Texas** legislators and policymakers on social studies standards and issues related to inclusive education (see page 13).
- Provided feedback on a hate crimes and appropriations bill in **New Jersey**.
- Researched and consulted on state-level immigration laws being proposed **across the country**, with the goal of pursuing more of this work in 2026.

# HONORING BHAI JASWANT SINGH KHALRA

This year, the Sikh Coalition undertook several projects to commemorate the life and legacy of Sikh human rights defender Bhai Jaswant Singh Khalra surrounding the 30th anniversary of his murder. Throughout this work, we were honored to partner with Navkiran Kaur Khalra, the daughter of Bhai Khalra.

**Teaching the Sangat:** In August, we held a virtual teach-in titled “Challenging the Darkness: The Life and Legacy of Bhai Jaswant Singh Khalra.” More than 140 attendees heard from speakers across the United States plus in India and the United Kingdom about the historical context of Bhai Khalra’s life, work, and murder; the modern threat of Indian transnational repression; and the sangat’s reflections on his legacy.



**Briefing Congress:** In September, we hosted a Capitol Hill briefing, “Revisiting Bhai Jaswant Singh Khalra’s Work in an Era of Transnational Repression,” to inform congressional staffers about Bhai Khalra’s legacy and the continued threat of transnational repression.

Staff from House and Senate offices, as well as allied organizations, attended the briefing; Congressman Eric Swalwell delivered opening remarks.

**Mobilizing Advocates:** Finally, the Sikh Coalition created a list of advocacy ‘action items’ for sangat members who would like to honor Bhai Jaswant Singh Khalra’s legacy, which included proposing a local-level resolution to honor Bhai Khalra and convening an organizational letter with more than 10 organizations urging Secretary of State Marco Rubio to designate India as a Country of Particular Concern for religious freedom.



**CAPITOL HILL BRIEFING**



**LOCAL RESOLUTION PRESENTATION**



**VIRTUAL TEACH-IN**

# FELLOWS ENGAGE WITH SANGAT ACROSS THE COUNTRY

The Sikh Coalition continues to involve youth advocates in our work through our fellowship programs. This year, for the first time, we brought on three education fellows: Tarnoor Kaur, Bismaad Kaur, and Tarun Kaur. We also welcomed our second cohort of Get Out the Vote (GOTV) fellows: Harreet Kaur and Jasmine Kaur Kohli.



## EDUCATION FELLOW PROJECTS

- Tabled at gurdwaras in Texas, Michigan, and Colorado.
- Wrote letters to school boards, urging stronger inclusion and re-inclusion of Sikhi in social studies curricula.
- Provided research support for our newest lesson plans and resource guides for previous lesson plans.



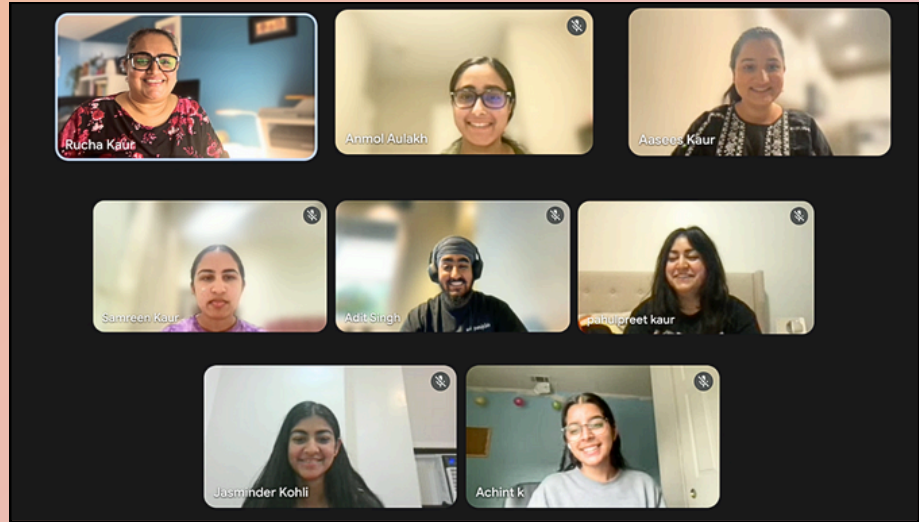
## GOTV FELLOW PROJECTS

- Organized "Register to Vote" drives and tabled at Glen Rock and Dashmesh Darbar Gurdwara Sahibs in New Jersey.
- Developed a key policy positions document covering mental health access, public safety, immigration, and education equity.

# PARTNERING WITH SIKH COLLEGE YOUTH ON SEVA PROJECTS

This year, the Sikh Coalition proudly launched our first-ever Sikh Student Association (SSA) Sangat-Seva Grant Program, an initiative designed to empower Sikh youth through campus-based leadership, advocacy, and seva. In this inaugural cycle, we awarded grants to five outstanding SSAs across the country: UC Davis, Columbia University, Cornell University, Michigan State University, and UC Riverside.

Each of these student groups is spearheading a unique project that uplifts Sikh awareness and promotes collective action, with a special focus on community seva projects, leadership development workshops, and resource dissemination on campuses. By fostering a national network of rising SSA leaders, this grant program deepens our collaboration with student-led organizations to advance Sikh representation, visibility, and voice within educational institutions.



“ Receiving the Sikh Student Association Sangat Seva Grant has been an incredible opportunity for us at Cornell. Beyond the grant itself, the shared spirit of sangat has made this experience so special.

Connecting with SSA leaders from coast to coast has made us feel part of a larger, growing movement for Sikh representation. Our project, Sikh Awareness Week, is one small part of that national effort to build understanding and pride!

~ Avneet Mehr, Cornell University

# SIKH COALITION ACROSS THE COUNTRY

*Throughout 2025, our staff continued to engage with sangats across the country through presentations and outreach.*



CALIFORNIA

In August, Senior State Policy Manager Puneet Kaur joined sangat and sevadars at Gurdwara Sahib Fremont to rally support for SB 509; throughout the year, she also led groups of sangat members to testify on the bill multiple times (see page 19).

In October, Legal Director Munmeeth Kaur and Education Director Manpreet Kaur met with sangat members to share updates on the organization's work in California including SB 509, immigration advocacy, efforts to safeguard Sikh students, Harpal Singh ji's case, and our core programs that protect the rights of Sikhs. Also in October, we hosted two Know Your Rights sessions for Truckers in Fresno (see page 18).



TEXAS

In January, Executive Director Harman Singh and former Legal Director Giselle Klapper co-presented with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) at the North American Sikh Medical and Dental Association's 2025 Annual Meeting in Dallas. The presentation focused on NIOSH's potential study on beard bands.

In September, Education Director Manpreet Kaur and Senior Education Manager Savleen Singh connected with Sikh students and sangat members at Gurdwara Sikh Sangat in Euless, presented the organization's civil rights and education work, and highlighted our newest resources.



## NEW JERSEY

In March, Executive Director Harman Singh and Managing Director of Education and Community Development Rucha Kaur met with sangat in southern New Jersey and discussed immigration Know Your Rights materials, transnational repression, and education. Then, in September, Federal Policy Manager Harjot Singh presented at "Bhai Khalra's Legacy, Our Responsibility," an event hosted at Rutgers University.



## INDIANA

In March, Community Development Director Aasees Kaur visited nine gurdwaras in the Indianapolis area disseminating Sikh Coalition's Immigration Know Your Rights materials (see page 9). Also, in November, Executive Director Harman Singh participated as a keynote speaker at the United Sikh Movement's Sikh Student Association Conference at Purdue University.



## MARYLAND

In July, Managing Director of Education and Community Development Rucha Kaur conducted two workshops on anti-bullying and the Sikh Coalition at Guru Harkrishan Institute of Sikh Studies Camp (GHISS) in Rockville. Federal Policy Manager Harjot Singh also participated in a Sikh professional career panel at GHISS for youth attendees held as part of the camp week.

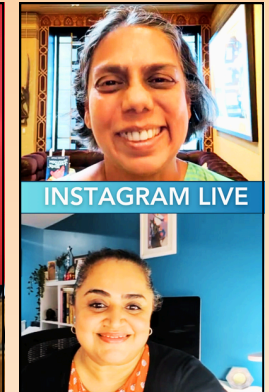
# WORKING ALONGSIDE THE CIVIL RIGHTS ECOSYSTEM

The Sikh Coalition continues to work with partners from a wide range of faith traditions and communities. This year, our staff spoke at panels, briefings, and conferences hosted by Interfaith Alliance, the Coalition for Religious Freedom in Public Schools, the Religion News Association, the North American Sikh Medical and Dental Association, Bedrock, Advancing Justice-AAJC, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, the South Asian Coalition, the Indian American Muslim Council, United Sikh Movement, SikhTeens, and more.

We also participated in and hosted multiple trainings for our fellow civil rights organizations. Two highlights included our staff running a hate crime rapid response simulation for fellow grantees of The Asian American Foundation, and our communications team hosting a workshop on organizational communications with Sikh partner organizations, facilitated by Ik Manzil and the Dasvandh Network.

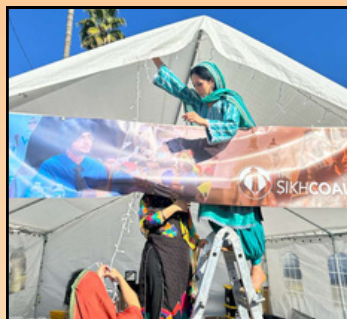
Finally we continued our Sikh Coalition Instagram Live Series this year, hosting conversations like:

- Sikh Women blazing new trails, with *Kaurs Reimagined* author Meeta Kaur
- Art and storytelling with *World of Wonder* author Valarie Kaur
- Family and immigration with *The Freedom Seeker* author Ruchira Gupta
- The importance of inclusive children stories with *A Vaisakhi to Remember* author Dr. Simran Jeet Singh and illustrator Japneet Kaur



# SIKH COALITION RETURNS TO THE YUBA CITY NAGAR KIRTAN

This November, the Sikh Coalition returned to Yuba City for the 46th annual Nagar Kirtan. We were grateful for the chance to distribute resources on immigration, trucking, hate crimes, bullying prevention, religious rights, and transnational repression to hundreds of sangat members. At our tent, Sikh Coalition staff also hosted a wide range of children's activities, book readings, and giveaways; fielded media requests; and conducted legal intakes for sangat members in need. On Saturday night, Federal Policy Manager Harjot Singh delivered a speech about the Sikh Coalition's work to combat transnational repression



# INTRODUCING THE SIKH SPEAKERS NETWORK

In May, the Sikh Coalition launched the ***Sikh Speakers Network***: ***Powered by the Sikh Coalition***. This initiative was created out of the need to highlight sangat members who can speak to the media, share their expertise in panel discussions and conferences, and otherwise engage the public. Including more than 90 sangat members after a second cohort was announced in September, the Sikh Speakers Network includes Sikh academics, non-profit directors, policy experts, community leaders, elected officials, lawyers, doctors, military officers, and educators. ***Learn more at [sikhspakersnetwork.org](http://sikhspakersnetwork.org).***



“I am honored to be among so many Sikh voices on this platform, which showcases the wide range of expertise and experience within our community.

~ Tejpal Singh Bainiwal  
Co-Founder  
Sikh American History Project

“Every young Sikh deserves to feel seen, supported, and capable of changing the world—and when we come together in that spirit, embracing unity over uniformity, we build ecosystems that sustain generations to come.

~ Harsimran Kaur  
Executive Director  
United Sikhs Movement

“There is a clear connection between raising our community’s profile and defending and expanding our civil rights. The Sikh Speakers Network furthers those important goals.

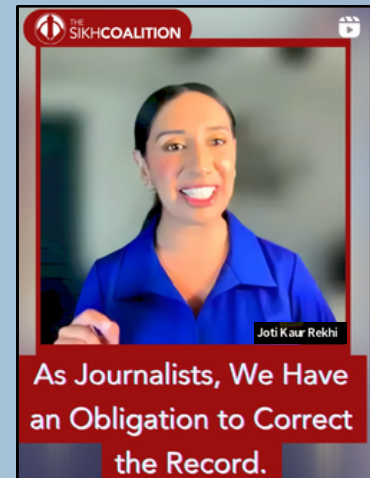
~ Deepak Ahluwalia,  
Managing Partner/Founder  
Singh Ahluwalia Attorneys at Law

# NEW RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING FOR REPORTERS

In May, the Sikh Coalition—in partnership with Dr. Simran Jeet Singh and the Religion News Foundation—launched an updated edition of ***Sikhi: A Reporter’s Guide***, our critical resource for reporters, producers, and others in the U.S. media.

In 2017, the Sikh Coalition and our partners first published *Sikhism: A Reporter’s Guide* in an effort to share comprehensive background information about the Sikh faith, traditions, and history. This new version includes updated background about recent geopolitical events, frequently asked questions, best practices specifically for reporters, and additional books and other resources for those who wish to learn more.

In October, the Sikh Coalition hosted a webinar in partnership with Religion News Association and Religion News Service called “Reporting on Sikhs and Sikhi: A Webinar for Journalists.” Moderator Paul O’Donnell, editor-in-chief of Religion News Service, engaged our panelists Angad Singh, Joti Kaur Rekhi, and Dr. Simran Jeet Singh in conversations about the trends we are seeing in reporting of Sikh communities and how we can continue striving for nuanced and contextual coverage. About 40 reporters and media professionals attended.



# SIKH COALITION WELCOMES NEW DIRECTORS

This summer, the Sikh Coalition welcomed two new individuals to the director staff, including a new legal director after Giselle Klapper concluded her eight-year tenure of service. **Munmeeth Kaur** joins the Sikh Coalition as Legal Director and brings nearly 20 years of experience practicing law and is an expert in the areas of civil rights, disability law, constitutional law, and immigration law. Prior to joining the Sikh Coalition, she served as Litigation Counsel at Disability Rights California.



**Manpreet Kaur** joined the Sikh Coalition as our new Education Director to help develop and execute the organization's strategy to push for a generational shift in Sikh awareness and make schools safer and more inclusive for all students. In addition to her role at Sikh Coalition, she also serves as the Vice Mayor of Bakersfield, California.



Also adding to the director team came two promotions from within our staff: **Aasees Kaur** now serves as Community Development Director and **Patrick Neuman** has been promoted to Operations Director.

# STRENGTHENING OUR TEAM TO SERVE THE SANGAT

## PROMOTED STAFF:

MANNIRMAL KAUR



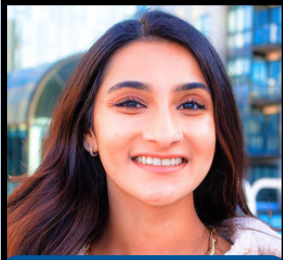
Senior Federal  
Policy Manger

SAHEL KAUR



Managing  
Attorney

PRABLEEN KAUR



Senior Development  
Manager

MARISSA ROSSETTI



Senior Staff  
Attorney

## ADDITIONAL NEW STAFF:

ANMOL KAUR AULAKH



Community  
Development Manager

HARJOT SINGH



Federal Policy  
Manager

GURVIR SINGH SIDHU



State Policy  
Manager

MANPREET KAUR TEJI



Senior Policy  
Fellow

# FINANCIALS

Since the Sikh Coalition was founded, our goal has been to run an organization that surpasses benchmarks of competence and professionalism, while unwaveringly upholding complete financial transparency.

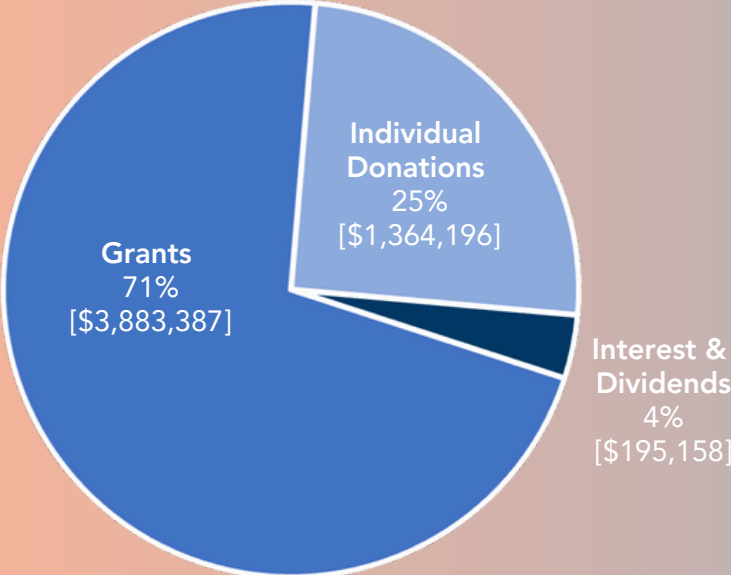
Each year, the Sikh Coalition undergoes an independent audit, proudly holds accreditation from the Better Business Bureau, maintains a 4 out of 4-star rating on Charity Navigator, and displays a Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar.

The majority of the Sikh Coalition's funding comes from donors like yourself: It is the steady and ongoing generosity of our sangat that ensures we can remain nimble and continue to scale our critical work. In addition, in 2024, the Sikh Coalition received competitive grants from foundations including Open Society Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, RISE Together Fund, Asian American Federation, The Asian American Foundation, Solidaire Network, and Arab American Association of New York. This support reflects both our sound financial practices and our proven ability to deliver results. Finally, the Sikh Coalition was honored to receive a one-time gift from MacKenzie Scott, which allows us to sustain our core work as several multi-year grants are concluding and as we plan strategically for 2026 and beyond.

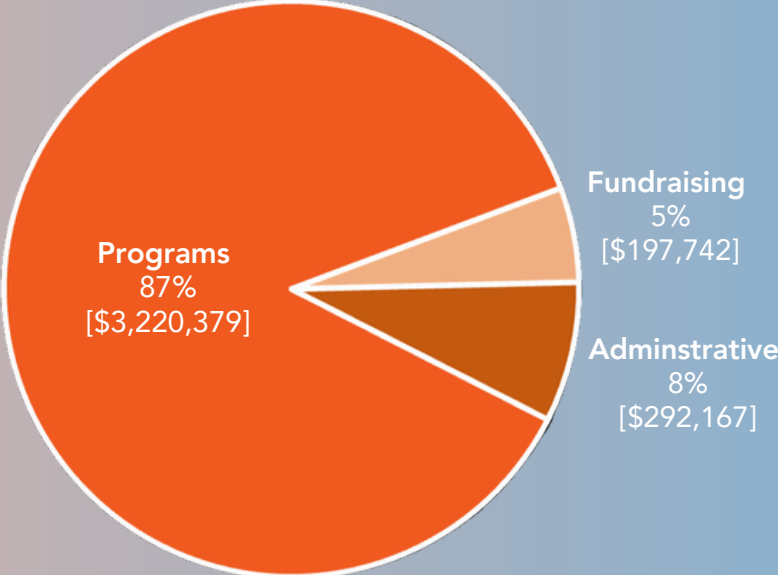


# 2024 AUDIT

2024 TOTAL INCOME:  
\$5,442,741



2024 TOTAL EXPENSES:  
\$3,710,288



*In addition to the income listed, the Sikh Coalition received \$660,935 in donated services for programs in 2024.*

## STAFF

Harman Singh, Executive Director  
Munmeeth Kaur, Legal Director  
Rucha Kaur, Managing Director of Education and Community Development  
Graham F. West, Managing Director of Policy and Communications  
Aasees Kaur, Community Development Director  
Manpreet Kaur, Education Director  
Patrick Neuman, Operations Director  
Harleen Singh, Development Director  
Sahel Kaur, Managing Attorney  
Abby Kelly Gualdoni, Senior Media and Communications Manager  
Mannirmal Kaur, Senior Federal Policy Manager  
Nimarta Kaur, Senior Communications Manager  
Puneet Kaur, Senior State Policy Manager  
Prableen Kaur, Senior Development Manager  
Marissa Rossetti, Senior Staff Attorney  
Afy Singh, Senior Digital Communications Manager  
Savleen Singh, Senior Education Manager  
Anmol Kaur Aulakh, Community Development Manager  
Deepali Gill, Legal Case Manager  
Gurleen Mann, Legal Intake Manager  
Gurvire Singh Sidhu, State Policy Manager  
Harjot Singh, Federal Policy Manager  
Manpreet Kaur Teji, Senior Policy Fellow  
Simran Jeet Singh, Senior Fellow

## BOARD

Harpreet Singh, Executive Board Co-Chair  
Sukhmani Kaur Kocher, Executive Board Co-Chair  
Prabhjot Singh, Board Treasurer  
Manpreet K. Singh, Board Secretary  
Suneet Kaur, Board Member  
Gurpreet Singh Ahuja, Board Member  
Nitasha Kaur Sawhney, Board Member  
Sandeep Singh, Board Member

# PLEASE DONATE TODAY!

Our full-time, high-impact organization is working **day and night** to protect your ability to practice Sikhi fearlessly. Your financial support will help us build for generations to come.



165 Broadway, Floor 23  
New York, NY 10006