

# STATE of WISCONSIN



## OFFICE of the GOVERNOR

# Proclamation

*WHEREAS*; on August 5, 2012, while members of the congregation were preparing for Sunday service and making a free community meal served to all visitors, a white supremacist gunman entered the gurdwara in Oak Creek and opened fire, killing seven beloved members of the Oak Creek Community; and

*WHEREAS*; Prakash Singh, 39, lived at the gurdwara where he helped lead daily prayers, and was known by his friends and family, including his wife, son, and daughter, as a caring and hard-working individual; and

*WHEREAS*; Paramjit Kaur Saini, 41, was devoted to her faith and to her family, including her two sons, who honored her life by testifying before the U.S. Congress, noting that the gunman “may have been full of hate, but my mother was full of love”; and

*WHEREAS*; Sita Singh, 41, who, along with his brother, Ranjit, was a granthi who attended to many duties at the gurdwara, is remembered by his family, including his wife, two sons, and two daughters, and his community for his kindness and seva; and

*WHEREAS*; Ranjit Singh, 49, had been a granthi at the gurdwara for more than a decade and worked hard to secure a bright future for his family by sending money back to them in India, and he is survived by his wife, son, and two daughters; and

*WHEREAS*; Satwant Singh Kaleka, 65, who was the founding president of the gurdwara and was integral to growing the sangat, lost his life running to confront the shooter, and he is survived by his wife, two sons, and grandchildren;

*WHEREAS*; Suveg Singh Khattrra, 84, was a strong and devout man who would spend many hours at the gurdwara, where he was known for offering uplifting scripture passages to members of the sangat, and he is survived by his five children and grandchildren; and

*WHEREAS*; Baba Punjab Singh, 72, who remained almost fully paralyzed after being shot during the attack and passed away on March 2, 2020, from complications related to his injuries, maintained the Sikh spirit of chardi kala, or relentless optimism, even in the face of incredible struggle and is survived by his wife, two daughters, and two sons; and

*WHEREAS*; ten years later, we continue to be inspired by the perseverance of the survivors and those who were injured during the attack and we recognize the medical and law enforcement professionals—including Lieutenant Brian Murphy and Officer Savan “Sam” Lenda—whose heroic efforts prevented additional loss of life, as well as the public servants who have helped the community heal; and

*WHEREAS*; Sikhism is the fifth largest world religion, and there are more than 25 million Sikhs worldwide, including an estimated 500,000 Sikh Americans whose contributions to the social, cultural, and economic vibrancy of our country cannot be understated; and

*WHEREAS*; since 9/11, Sikh Americans have experienced bigotry, backlash, and violence, and remain among the most vulnerable communities targeted in both hate crimes and school bullying, but this hate has been met with unwavering courage, strength, compassion, resilience, and chardi kala; and

*WHEREAS*; the legacies of those seven individuals who were tragically lost will live on forever, as they are remembered by their families and community with love and honored through continued acts of service, interfaith collaboration, and civic engagement; and

*WHEREAS*; while Oak Creek remains a painful reminder of the work that still must be done to protect all communities in the United States against the rising threat of targeted, hate-fueled violence, it is also a shining example of resilience in the face of tragedy, and a continued, shared hope that we can work together to make a better tomorrow; and

*WHEREAS*; today, the state of Wisconsin seeks to honor the seven lives needlessly lost, those who were injured, and all those who will be forever impacted by the mass shooting at the gurdwara in Oak Creek on August 5, 2012;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,  
do hereby proclaim August 5, 2022, as the

## 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OAK CREEK SIKH TEMPLE SHOOTING

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance  
to all our state’s residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 4<sup>th</sup> day of August 2022.

TONY EVERS  
GOVERNOR

By the Governor:

DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE  
Secretary of State

