

CITY OF FRESNO

Office of Councilmember Esmeralda Soria

Is hereby presented in honor of:

Sikh Women's Day 2022

WHEREAS, *The Central Valley is home to one of the largest populations of Sikh women outside of Punjab, India. Since the first Sikh women pioneers set foot in California in the early 1900s to today, Sikh women – who all share the name “Kaur” – have successfully built their families’ livelihoods and created a community steeped in their religious and cultural heritage while at the same time honoring the best of America’s values and traditions; and*

WHEREAS, *Early Sikh immigrants worked mainly in farming, bringing their extensive experience from Punjab – where agriculture is a major industry – to their new home in the Central Valley where agriculture is also a mainstay. From the early 1980s to the present, the Sikh community in the Central Valley has grown and diversified to now encompass women and men engaged in a diverse set of professions. Along with growth and new opportunities come new needs and challenges. Through two nonprofit organizations based in Fresno - the Sikh Women’s Organization of Central California (SWOCC) and the Jakara Movement – local Sikh women have diligently worked over the past two decades to serve and engage their community, provide education and support to foster health and wellness, and respond to changing needs; and*

WHEREAS, *These organizations’ programs and activities help women and girls develop leadership skills and empower them to cultivate their unique gifts and talents. Events like the International Women’s Day Luncheon, Teeyan da Mela, Bhujangan summer camps, and Kaur Nights at the Paaras Youth Center - along with many others - provide Kaur occasions to participate in civic activities as well as opportunities for connection and growth; and*

WHEREAS, *Sikh women also regularly organize and take part in local community service projects, from park cleanups to volunteering at the food bank, helping the homeless, and others. In the last two particularly challenging years, Kaur have risen to the occasion during the pandemic to support both the mainstream and Sikh communities by holding monthly food distributions at the Sikh Institute of Fresno, sewing cloth masks for local health providers, hosting vaccine events at local Gurdwaras, and providing information and outreach on best COVID-19 health practices as well as vaccine education; and*

WHEREAS, *With vision and dedication, local Sikh women of all ages have united to build community and sisterhood, promote health and wellbeing, and aid vulnerable populations. In doing so, Sikh women actively advance gender equity and the notion that all people deserve the opportunity to realize their full human potential, while ensuring a space where women’s voices lead and are heard and understood. In essence, these women strive to uphold the key principles of their Sikh faith – equality, justice, and the oneness of all humanity – as they uplift families and communities one act of service at a time; and*

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, *that the City of Fresno Mayor and City Council hereby proclaim March 10, 2022 to be:*

“Sikh Women’s Day 2022” in the City of Fresno

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, *we have hereunto set our hands and affixed the seal of the City of Fresno, California, this 10th day of March 2022.*

ESMERALDA SORIA, Councilmember, District 1

LUIS CHAVEZ, Councilmember, District 5

MIKE KARBASSI, Councilmember, District 2

GARRY BREDEFELD, Councilmember, District 6

MIGUEL ARIAS, Councilmember, District 3

NELSON ESPARZA, Council President, District 7

TYLER MAXWELL, Council Vice President, District 4

JERRY DYER, Honorable Mayor