

## Senate Resolution 648

By: Senators Fort of the 39th, Tate of the 38th, Butler of the 55th and Henson of the 41st

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the Sikh community's celebration of Vaisakhi on April 14, 2013; and for other  
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Sikhism is a religion that was founded in the Punjab region of South Asia more  
4 than five centuries ago and was introduced to the United States in the 19th century; and

5 WHEREAS, Sikhism is the fifth largest world religion with approximately 25 million  
6 adherents from diverse backgrounds throughout the world and 500,000 in the United States;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Sikhs in Georgia pursue diverse professions and walks of life, making rich  
9 contributions to the social, cultural, and economic vibrancy of our great nation; and

10 WHEREAS, the Sikh people have a renowned military history marked by gallantry and  
11 self-sacrifice that is epitomized by the heroic last stand at the Battle of Saragarhi; and

12 WHEREAS, the Battle of Saragarhi was fought on September 12, 1897, between the 36th  
13 Sikh Regiment of British India, which was defending an army post, and 10,000 Afghan and  
14 Orakzai tribesmen; and

15 WHEREAS, when the British commander radioed the 21 Sikhs, led by Havildar Ishar Singh,  
16 that timely reinforcement was impossible, they chose not to abandon the fort but to stand and  
17 fight to the death; and

18 WHEREAS, details of the fight were continuously relayed to the command as the Sikhs died  
19 gallantly, delaying the Afghan attack so severely that the invading force was eventually  
20 repulsed; and

21 WHEREAS, the British Parliament rendered the Sikhs a standing ovation upon hearing the  
22 accounts, and Queen Victoria stated, "The British, as well as the Indians, are proud of the  
23 36th Sikh Regiment. It is no exaggeration to record that the armies which possess the valiant  
24 Sikhs cannot face defeat in war"; and

25 WHEREAS, all 21 Sikhs who died at Saragarhi were awarded the Indian Order of Merit,  
26 which is equivalent to the Victoria Cross; and

27 WHEREAS, Vaisakhi is one of the most religiously significant days in Sikh history,  
28 commemorating the creation of the Khalsa, a fellowship of devout Sikhs, by Guru Gobind  
29 Singh in 1699; and

30 WHEREAS, the Sikh religion is based on a belief in one God and the equality of all human  
31 beings; and

32 WHEREAS, the celebration of Vaisakhi includes performing Seva, selfless service, such as  
33 providing free meals to all visitors to Sikh Gurdwaras, House of Worship.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
35 recognize the Sikh community's celebration of Vaisakhi on April 14, 2013.

36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
37 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Sikh community of Georgia.