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## LETTER OF CONCERN

Buddy Altobello  
Chairman of the Capitol Preservation and Restoration Committee

cc: Elizabeth.Conroy@cga.ct.gov

**Subject: Removal of Statue of John Mason from CT State Capitol.**

Mr.Chairman,

I am writing you this letter in regards to one of the issues that came to my knowledge, in regards to the Statue of John Mason, which has been placed on the State Capitol building.

I strongly believe that City and State Monuments have significant importance as it speaks the volume for values that state or people of that state holds.

Every time I go to the State Capitol in Hartford, I feel proud that the State of Connecticut recognized Nov 1st as Sikh Genocide Remembrance Day. At the same time, when the Sikh community does their annual event on State Capitol North steps facing Bushnell park under the statue of John Mason, it makes me question if that is a good location to do our commemorations.

At this point, we all know that Capt. John Mason is the man who led the massacre of the Pequot Indians during the battle of Mystic in 1637.

Being a Representative of the Sikh community, I can easily relate to this and feel the pain. In June 1984 Sikh Vatican "Darbar Sahib" was attacked by Prime minister Indira Gandhi in which thousands of Innocent People including men, women, and children were killed, which was followed by the November 1984, Sikh Genocide, in which Sikhs were burnt alive with tires on their body.

What John mason did back then is no different than that, and in modern terms or under the United Nation charter, it is considered as a Genocide.

I don't think men who burned alive over 500 men, women, and children deserve any honor from our State.

We must condemn that target killing of the tribe, and his attempt to erase the entire identity and heritage of that tribal nation.

I, in no form or state believe in erasing any kind of history, and that was the reason for me to create the Sikh Art Gallery in Norwich, Connecticut.

I do believe that correct information should be served to our communities and misconceptions should be addressed on various topics.

This is one of those topics where instead of glorifying oppressors, we have the opportunity to instead notice the oppressed community and try to give them closure.

Also, I strongly suggest that the State should make a common memorial dedicated to the message of love and peace in which various genocides and Holocausts should be listed including the Armenian and Sikh Genocide.

We should be working on creating an educated community and helping heal the open wounds of people so they can feel emotional ties to their state.

This is the only way for us to move forward and create a strong community.

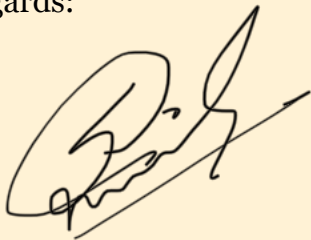
As a constitution State we need to be an example for other states and show our commitment for Human rights and must provide opportunities for marginalized communities to display their culture, history and Heritage.

We must also work as a state on making sure we provide multi-lingual resources so various people feel welcome and secure raising their families in our state.

I look forward to working with you to create a well educated and informed community.

Thank you for your service to our State of Connecticut.


Regards:



Swarnjit Singh  
Member: Norwich City Council  
Representative: Sikh Community of Connecticut

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