

Read to City Council by Nupur Anand
10/6/21

Address to City Council

Hello & Good Afternoon,

My name is Nupur Anand and I am second generation Indian who came to this country at the age of 5 . My parents, both physicians, saw America as their dreamland where if they worked hard, they would be rewarded and be able to make a better life for themselves and their children.

The Indian community has been a significant part of the national mosaic for more than 8 decades. It has been estimated that today there are close to 6 million Hindus in U.S. or close to 2% of the U.S. population. There are several million more Americans who have incorporated one or more Hindu practices in their daily lives. The earliest Hindu migration to the U.S. was in the 1600s. Hindus started emigrating in significant numbers in mid 1900s. The majority have migrated from India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, the African continent, United Kingdom, the West Indies and others who came as refugees from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bhutan.

Now 2nd and 3rd generation Hindus are carrying forward their parents and grand parents' religion, cultural traditions and values that are focused on education and hard work. They are employed in every field including science, technology, engineering, medicine, business, education, law, journalism, politics, the judiciary, armed forces, space exploration name a few. You will find Hindus excelling within these fields while striving to bring equitable freedom, education and social justice to the society they are a part of.

For the first time in our nation, in 2021, more than ¹²6 states have declared October as Hindu heritage month. I am happy to say that Ohio is among those states. A special thank you goes to Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley and our city council for declaring October as Hindu Heritage month in the city of Cincinnati.

Our beliefs and values are expressed in one word Hindutva. Hindutva embodies human rights, animal rights, environment protection and sustainable and harmonious living. It is the essence of being a Hindu. It is our identity. Two intrinsic beliefs are "Oneness in All" embodied in the Sanskrit words, " Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam ", signifying the whole world is one family. Another core belief is "Truth is One, Paths are many'. We respect and accept all faiths, everyone path maybe different but the truth is the same. Therefore we believe in living in harmony with the utmost respect for people of all races and religions.

In spite of our law abiding peaceful "living in harmony with all" nature, hate campaigns targeting our peaceful community often emerge from others with vested geopolitical agendas. Powered with unlimited funds they play a dominant role in the media and academia wielding undeniable influence on American politics. As the recent events in Afghanistan have shown, these forces pose a serious threat to our nation's security as well as to the right to equality and education for women and all minorities.

Going forward if anything concerning Hindus ever arises, we would respectfully ask the City of Cincinnati to collaborate with us ^{*}towards a resolution.

Thank you for your patience and attention.

* The Hindu Society