

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 23, 2016

Horacio Muratori  
President  
International Basketball Federation /Federation Internationale de Basketball  
Route Suisse 5  
1295 Miles - Switzerland

Dear President Muratori,

Nearly two years ago the International Basketball Federation (FIBA), after preventing observant Sikhs from participating in international games, announced that it would review its policies and after the 2016 Olympics make a decision on whether observant Sikh basketball players may participate in future FIBA games. In explaining its ban of observant Sikhs, FIBA said the wearing of a small turban violated Article 4.4.2 of FIBA's official rules, which states that "Players shall not wear equipment (objects) that may cause injury to other players."

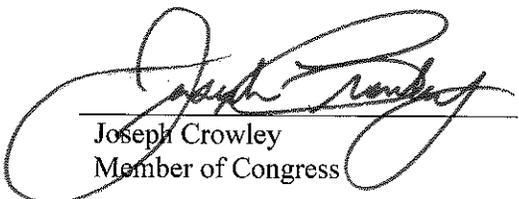
Now, as we are days or weeks away from FIBA's timeline for a final decision, we reiterate strong Congressional support for a decisive change in FIBA policies.

Sikhs participate in a wide variety of sports around the globe, and there has never been a single instance of someone being harmed or injured by a turban, or of a turban interfering with the sport. Already, at both the amateur and professional levels, Sikhs have played sports without a problem. This includes Sikh American Dipanjot Singh, who played Division I basketball at the University of Illinois at Chicago in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) before going on to play semi-professional basketball in several leagues. It also includes Darsh Preet Singh, who played at the NCAA level at Trinity University in Texas. Both were beloved by teammates and excelled in their roles. Darsh's jersey has been at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC to help recognize him as the first-ever Sikh-American to play in the NCAA.

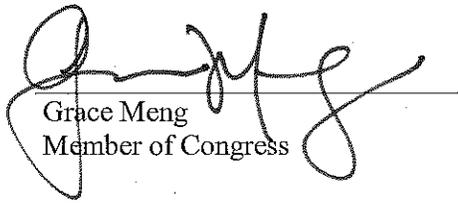
Observant Sikhs excel at more than basketball. In fact, the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) already changed its policies to ensure that Sikhs and other religious minorities are not subjected to discrimination. Sikh FIFA players wear turbans while playing in international soccer events.

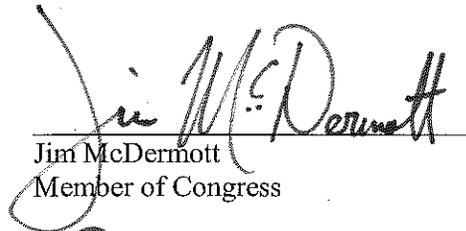
Given this information, it is long past time that FIBA ends discrimination against observant Sikhs and allows them to participate; such a change could also expand opportunities for players of other faiths, such as observant Muslims. Basketball has rapidly become a global sport popular not only in the United States but in countries like India where many Sikhs proudly participate. There is no justification for continuing the ban, and we strongly appeal to you to quickly announce that observant Sikhs and others may participate in all FIBA games without being forced to remove their articles of faith.

Sincerely,

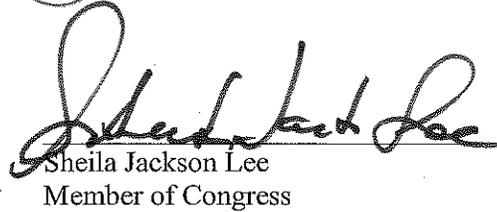
  
Joseph Crowley  
Member of Congress

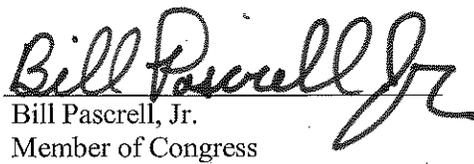
  
Ami Bera  
Member of Congress

  
Grace Meng  
Member of Congress

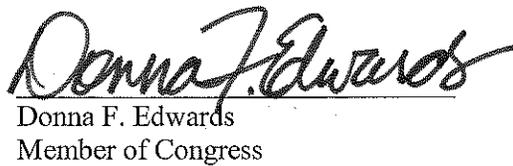
  
Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress

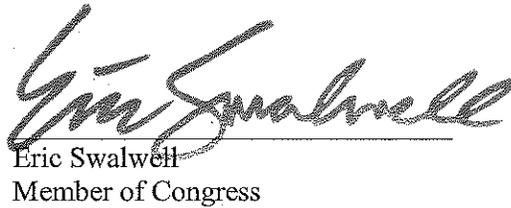
  
Michael M. Honda  
Member of Congress

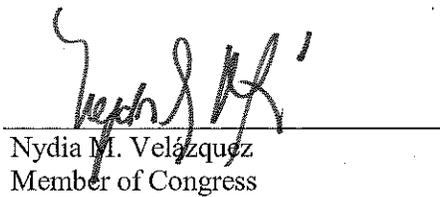
  
Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

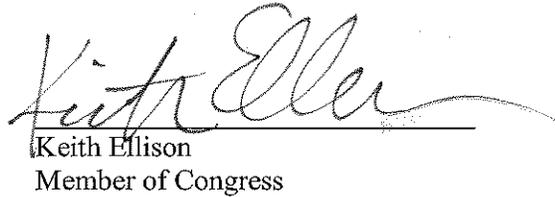
  
Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress

  
Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

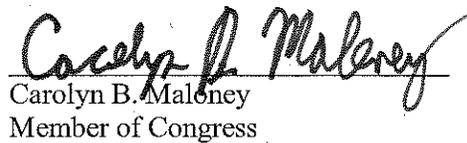
  
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Eric Swalwell  
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Nydia M. Velázquez  
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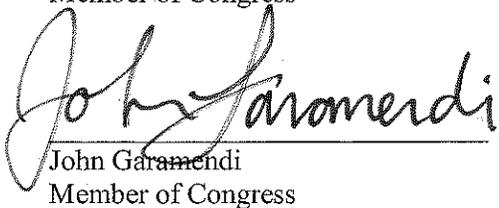
  
Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress

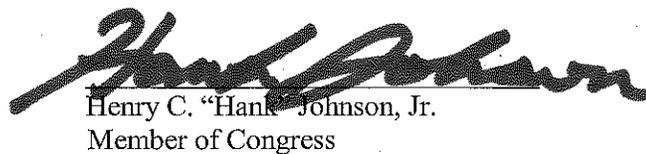
  
Mark Takano  
Member of Congress

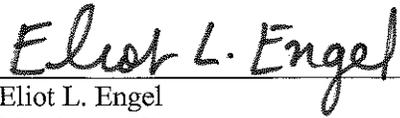
  
Carolyn B. Maloney  
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Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress

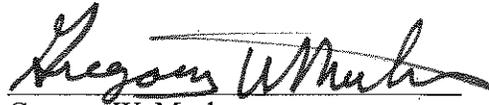
  
Ted Deutch  
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John Garamendi  
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
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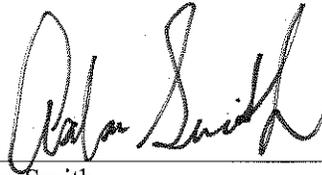
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Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress



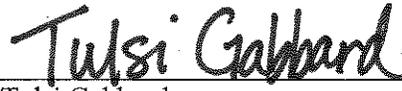
Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



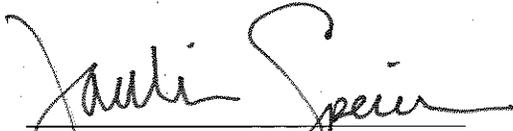
Adam Smith  
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Mark DeSaulnier  
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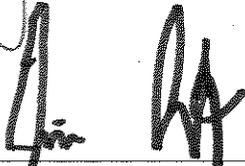
Tulsi Gabbard  
Member of Congress



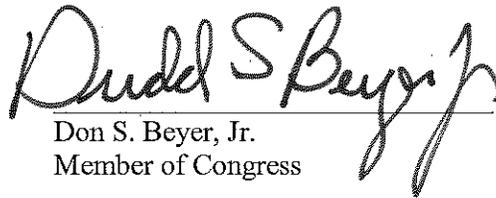
Jackie Speier  
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Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



Don S. Beyer, Jr.  
Member of Congress



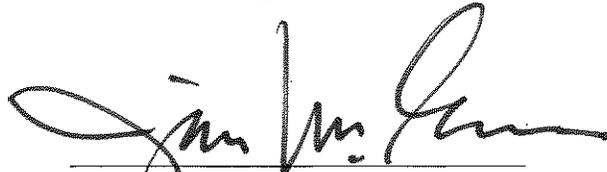
Frank Pallone  
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Kathleen Rice  
Member of Congress



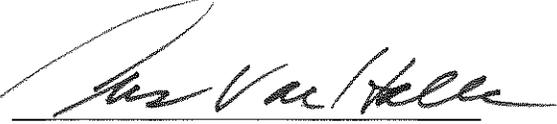
Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



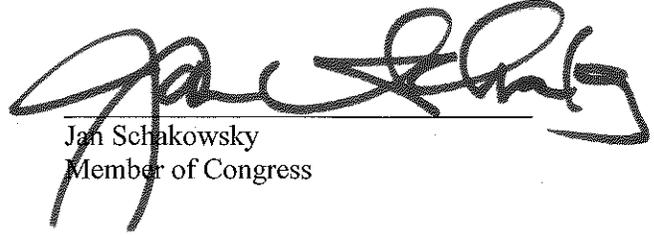
Earl Blumenauer  
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Chris Van Hollen  
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress



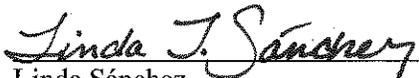
Barbara Lee  
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Ben Ray Lujan  
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Steve Israel  
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Linda Sánchez  
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Paul Tonko  
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