

Amandeep Sidhu Discusses the Right of Sikhs Serving in the Marines to Wear Articles of Faith in *New York Times* Write-up

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Amandeep Sidhu—Winston & Strawn partner and pro bono co-counsel for the Sikh Coalition—was recently quoted in a front-page *New York Times* article titled “The Marines Reluctantly Let a Sikh Officer Wear a Turban. He Says It’s Not Enough.” The article delves into the story of 1st Lieutenant (1stLt) Sukhbir Singh Toor, an active-duty officer in the U.S. Marine Corps who is seeking to serve with his Sikh articles of faith. If a full accommodation is granted to 1stLt Toor, it would be the first for an active-duty Sikh Marine.

Currently, 1stLt Toor has received only partial accommodation from the Department of the Navy, which recognizes his right to maintain his articles of faith but still imposes undue restrictions on his free exercise of religion. The Marine Corps argues that the mere sight of a deviation from uniformity inherently hinders mission accomplishment.

As Amandeep asserts in the *NYT* article, “The problem with that is that we have shown through practical demonstration that it isn’t the case....We don’t want change to get rammed down anyone’s throat by a federal court, but that seems like the path we are on.”

In a [press release](#) from The Sikh Coalition, Amandeep goes on to say that, “The Corps’ focus on aesthetic preferences about ‘uniformity’ over either equality of opportunity under the law or even mission readiness is a serious disappointment...The Army and the Air Force have both been made stronger by Sikh servicemembers who serve honorably with their articles of faith; it is time for the Marine Corps to live up to the standard set by these other branches.”

[Click here](#) to read the full *New York Times* article.

[Click here](#) to learn more about The Sikh Coalition.

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