

## **DIWALI PROCLAMATION TEMPLATE**

WHEREAS, the Hindu American Foundation and over one billion celebrants worldwide reverently observe the festival of Diwali, the “Festival of Lights” symbolizing the victory of dharma, and good over evil;

WHEREAS, Diwali is one of the most celebrated festivals of great significance to Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists; and

WHEREAS, Diwali falls on \_\_\_\_\_ (*day of week*), \_\_\_\_\_ (*month*) \_\_\_\_\_ (*day*) this year in accordance with the lunar calendar, and brings together families, friends, and communities here in the U.S. and around the globe in goodwill, peace, and a shared sense of renewal; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress officially passed unanimous resolutions since 2007 recognizing the religious and historical significance of Diwali; and

WHEREAS, celebrants renew their commitment to upholding values of truth, non-harming, and restraint through their thoughts, words, and actions;

WHEREAS, Diwali is a time for dana (charitable giving) and seva (selfless service) by bringing light in the form of wisdom, knowledge, nourishment, and shelter in order to alleviate the tangible forms of suffering, such as hunger, disease, and poverty;

WHEREAS, the shared Indian holiday of Diwali signifies a special time of peace and serenity with the hope of building bridges of understanding and tearing down barriers of intolerance; and

WHEREAS, Diwali is celebrated by many Hindus as a day of thanksgiving for the homecoming of Lord Rama and the beginning of the new year for many Hindus; and

WHEREAS, Diwali is a festival of lights during which celebrants light *diyas*, small oil lamps, place them around the home, and pray for knowledge, peace, and universal well-being; and

WHEREAS, for Sikhs, Diwali is celebrated as the day that the sixth founding Sikh Guru, or revered teacher, Guru Hargobind, was released from captivity by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir; and

WHEREAS, for Jains, Diwali marks the anniversary of the attainment of moksha, or liberation, by Mahavira, the last of the Tirthankaras (the great teachers of Jain dharma), at the end of his life in 527 B.C.; and

WHEREAS, for Buddhists, especially Newar Buddhists, Diwali is commemorated as Ashok Vijayadashami, the day the great Emperor Ashoka embraced Buddhism as his faith.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the \_\_\_\_\_ (City/County) of \_\_\_\_\_ (city/county), \_\_\_\_\_ (state), does hereby recognize the religious and historical significance of Diwali, the Festival of Lights and Diwali's message of tolerance, compassion, and the victory of good over evil which resonates with the American spirit; and

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED that the \_\_\_\_\_ (City/County) of \_\_\_\_\_ (city/county), \_\_\_\_\_ (state), proudly expresses its deepest respect for Indian Americans and South Asian Americans throughout the world and here in the \_\_\_\_\_ (City/County) of \_\_\_\_\_ (city/county), \_\_\_\_\_ (state) community, and all those who celebrate the Festival of Diwali on \_\_\_\_\_ (month) \_\_\_\_\_ (day), 20\_\_ (year) and likewise encourages all the people of \_\_\_\_\_ (city/county), \_\_\_\_\_ (state) to join us in recognizing the contributions of all Hindu, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists active in all aspects of our vibrant economy and civic society.

On this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ (month) 20\_\_ (year);

SIGNED

TITLE

GOVERNMENT SEAL