

A similar case happened in Cincinnati in 1996. The First Ohio District Court of Appeals overturned a municipal court conviction of a Sikh man for carrying a concealed weapon. Judge Mark Painter of that court wrote that "to be a Sikh is to wear a kirpan—it is that simple. It is a religious symbol and in no way a weapon."

Like Christianity, the Sikh religion is a monotheistic, divinely revealed and independent religion which believes in the equality of the whole human race, including gender equality. They pray, work hard to earn an honest living, and share their earnings with the needy.

I know many Sikhs in my district who are baptized and carry this symbol Kirpan. I would not like any of my constituents to be harassed for practicing their religion. We must educate our law-enforcement agencies regarding this religious symbol of the Sikhs.

Our Constitution grants religious freedom to all. We want Sikh Americans to practice their religion without any interference, even if we have to pass special legislation allowing the Sikhs to carry Kirpans.

I would like to put the Detroit News article on the Bhatia case into the RECORD.

[From the Detroit News, Sept. 23, 1999]

CAN A WEAPON BE A RELIGIOUS ICON?

MENTOR, OHIO—When he was baptized a Sikh in India, Gurbachan Singh Bhatia, now 69, vowed to always wear a kirpan, a 6-inch knife symbolizing his willingness to defend the faith.

But during investigation of a minor traffic mishap in this Cleveland suburb, Bhatia was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon. At the time, he was returning home from a religious ceremony blessing the new home of a Sikh family.

Police Chief Richard Amiotte said his officers acted properly in enforcing the law banning concealed weapons. "How can you describe for me the difference between a ceremonial knife and any knife?" he asked.

Bhatia must appear for a pretrial hearing Oct. 4. If convicted, he could face up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine. But Ron Graham, city prosecutor, said he may be willing to drop the charges if the Sikh priest can demonstrate that he is required by his religion to carry the kirpan.

Although state law does not allow for exceptions, Graham said, "We don't want to prosecute anyone for exercising religious freedom."

In a similar case in Cincinnati in 1996, the 1st Ohio District Court of Appeals overturned a municipal court conviction of a Sikh man for carrying a concealed weapon.

"To be a Sikh is to wear a kirpan—it is that simple. It is a religious symbol and in no way a weapon," Judge Mark Painter wrote.

RECOGNIZING OF JOANNA LUBKIN AND THE STUDENT HISTORIC PRESERVATION TEAM

HON. CHARLES F. BASS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 23, 1999

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to your attention an event in which I participated

celebrating the 35th anniversary of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and to bring recognition to the remarkable young girl I met and the group to which she belongs.

On July 22, 1999, I joined civic and conservation leaders on a bicycle tour of Mine Falls Park in Nashua, New Hampshire, which has received four separate state-side grants totaling \$684,496. During the tour, we stopped at a gatehouse built in 1886. Fairgrounds Junior High School student Joanna Lubkin told us about her involvement with the Student Historic Preservation Team (SHPT) and their efforts to restore the building.

The team's restoration efforts began last May with the removal of graffiti from the building's exterior. Once the removal is complete, the students plan to landscape the area surrounding the building and create inside a museum. The museum would highlight the gates that regulated the flow of water into a canal that runs from Mine falls to Nashua's millyard, providing power to the textile mills that were a vital part of Nashua's development as a manufacturing center in the 19th century.

This project is important, not only because of the gatehouse's historic value to the community, but also because of the impact participating in its restoration has had on Joanna Lubkin. I hope that Joanna's experience will encourage other young people to get involved in their community.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you a copy of Joanna Lubkin's remarks for the RECORD:

My name is Joanna Lubkin and I have been an active part of the Student Historic Preservation Team for about a year. I hope to see this project out to the end and beyond. Being in SHPT has really changed my outlook on life and the world around me. I have met many new friends and have been able to meet with city officials and have conversations with them about our generations vision for the future. For once I felt that I could really make a difference in our community.

When Ms. Coe told my class about the Gatehouse and its role in the making of our city and its sad story of neglect, I felt compelled to join the club, if nothing else to learn some more about the history of Nashua. Over that school year, I learned about more than just my city's past, I realized that we cannot hope to achieve a new future without maintaining the links to our past. I accomplished things that I didn't think I'd ever be able to do, (or want to do for that matter—but I had a blast!) such as editing the first issue of our newsletter.

I also spent many hours fundraising and planning with the group. During that time, I often found myself thinking about what a monumental task it was that we were trying to accomplish, but the more I thought about it, the more I felt proud to be a part of such a group of people.

I'll never forget how nervous I was at the first Charrette that we held at City Hall. Other older members in the group had meetings with big professionals like this before, but for me, I had never even been in City Hall except once on a tour. The feeling I had when I saw the other adults in the room nodding in agreement with our plans was almost indescribable. Until then, I had this tiny voice in the back of my head saying, "What are you nuts? You're a kid! No one's going to listen to you." But they did listen. And for once someone thought of kids not as a bunch of little gremlins to keep control of, but as real people who could be just as serious as any adult.

I look at things now from a point of view where if there is something that I see as unjust I can do something to make a difference. I find myself sticking up for other kids more often now and voicing my opinions about what is going on in the world. I realize that I can no longer be a passive person who sits and watches the news and says, "Wow. Wish I could do something like that." I have the chance to actually be the person making the news, and that I can really do things to help other people.

JOANNA LUBKIN,
SHPT Member.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EVA M. CLAYTON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 23, 1999

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, September 21, 1999 I was in my district assisting my constituents with the devastation of Hurricane Floyd.

Had I been present, the following is how I would have voted: Rollcall No. 427 (H.R. 2116) "aye"—Veterans' Millennium Health Care Act; rollcall No. 428 (H.R. 1431) "aye"—Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization; and rollcall No. 429 (H.R. 468) "aye"—Saint Helena Island National Scenic Area Act.

DOLLARS TO THE CLASSROOM

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 23, 1999

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the Dollars to the Classroom Resolution, to benefit schoolchildren and teachers all across this country, by calling on education agencies at all levels to get 95 percent of federal education dollars into the classrooms of this country. A similar resolution passed the House 310-99 in the 105th Congress.

Further, the Dollars to the Classroom Act language to codify the principles in the resolution also passed the House in the 105th Congress.

I have been working on this legislation because I believe in the importance of doing all that we can to improve the academic achievement of our public school children. How is this accomplished? We believe that empowering the teachers and bolstering the classroom resources of our kids directly improves their learning process.

When we think of our children's efforts to learn, we often think of the tools that go into forming and shaping their young minds: tools like books, globes, computers . . . and things like flash cards, spelling tests, and calculators. We do not think of bureaucratic programs and stacks of paperwork. Yet, many of our federal dollars that go to elementary and secondary education do not reach our kids. That's why Dollars to the Classroom is so important. This is a simple concept. Instead of keeping education dollars here in Washington, let's ensure that 95 cents on every federal dollar is sent directly to parents, teachers, and