

Sikh Coalition calls for White House liaison in wake of Indianapolis shooting

by [Alejandra Molina](#) in the [May 19, 2021](#) issue



A body is taken from the scene where multiple people were shot at a FedEx Ground facility in Indianapolis on April 16. (AP Photo / Michael Conroy)

In the wake of the FedEx shooting in Indianapolis that left eight people dead, including four members of the Sikh community, the Sikh Coalition wants President Joe Biden's administration to enact policies to address "long-standing challenges" impacting Sikh Americans.

To begin doing so, the advocacy group said the Biden administration should appoint a Sikh American liaison in the White House Office of Public Engagement to ensure a “wide range of the community’s voices are heard and acted upon.”

In an April 17 letter addressed to the Biden administration, the Sikh Coalition said, “Our community has largely felt ignored in the aftermath of 9/11 backlash hate attacks and discrimination, and continues to see the reverberations of hate, bullying, profiling and discrimination with far-reaching consequences even to this day.”

The coalition also said the Biden administration should share public awareness about Sikh Americans through public visits.

While the FedEx shooter’s motive is not yet known, the coalition said it’s important for Biden’s administration to recognize the “attacker’s knowledge of this workplace.”

“Who he was targeting must be taken into account when the Administration acknowledges the impact of hate, bias and white supremacist activity affecting our communities,” the coalition said.

The coalition wants Biden to relaunch interagency hate crime meetings and create a federal task force. Hate crime reporting, the coalition said, should be improved by passing the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act and “ensuring that all law enforcement agencies are required to report hate crimes.”

The coalition also wants Biden to reintroduce and pass the Justice for Victims of Hate Crimes Act and the Disarm Hate Act to “close the loophole that limits federal prosecution of mixed motive hate crimes” and “to keep weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of dangerous individuals.”

Lastly, the coalition wants Biden to ensure that all spaces of worship, including Sikh gurdwaras across the country, are provided with assistance in order to obtain federal funding from sources such as the Nonprofit Security Grant Program.

—Religion News Service