



RUSA Resolution 15S21-1

Author: Prasiddha Sudhakar, *President of Hindu Students Council*, Sanika Palande, *Technology Chair of Hindu Students Council*, Nicholas F. LaBelle, *Emeritus President*

Sponsors: Executive Committee

Co-sponsors: Hindu Student Council

Resolution to Condemn Hinduphobia & Co-Sponsor “Understanding Hinduphobia” Conference

Whereas, it is important to recognize that the state of New Jersey, home to Rutgers University, has the largest population of Hindu Americans constituting an estimated 3% of the population¹, and in addition, college campuses make up for an estimated 24,000 Hindu undergraduate and graduate students in the U.S.A.²; and

Whereas, it is important to protect Hindu students on campus against Hinduphobia, and the working definition of Hinduphobia is “a set of antagonistic, destructive, and derogatory attitudes and behaviors towards Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism) and Hindus that may manifest as fear or hatred”; and

Whereas, protection of Hindu students against bias and hatred of any kind provides for a supportive campus environment, cultural learning opportunities, and contributes to personal development to fashion civil, compassionate, and caring citizens and future leaders; and

Whereas, according to the FBI 2018 Hate Crime Statistics Report released in November 2018³, 12 reported incidents and 14 offenses against Hindus in the US were documented, depicting an increase from 11 reported incidents in 2017 and 10 incidents in 2016, marking the third straight year of increased violence targeting Hindu Americans; and

Whereas, Hinduism and Hinduphobia remain poorly understood in the American public sphere and media, and according to a study conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2014, only 22%

¹ **Pewforum:** <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/state/new-jersey/>

² **Hinduism Today:** <https://www.hinduismtoday.com/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=492>

³ **FBI:** <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2018/topic-pages/victims>

of Americans knew a practitioner of the Hindu faith, and Americans in general also held a neutral or negative view of Hindus compared to other religions in the United States⁴; and

Be it hereby resolved, the Rutgers University Student Assembly expresses solidarity with Hindu students and condemns those who seek to perpetuate anti-Hindu acts, including denial of the existence of Hinduphobia, at the University and throughout the state of New Jersey; and

Be it hereby further resolved, the Rutgers University Student Assembly agrees to co-sponsor “Understanding Hinduphobia Conference” to protect Hindu students on campus by educating Rutgers community members and students across the United States of America about the historical, empirical, and epistemic evidence of Hinduphobia.

⁴ **Pew Research Center:**

<https://www.pewforum.org/2017/02/15/americans-express-increasingly-warm-feelings-toward-religious-groups/>