The Center for Leadership and Justice and the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance are appalled at the recent attack on Rep. Maryam Khan after Eid al-Adha observances in Hartford on June 28, 2023.

Islamophobia, racism, and violence against women are scourges that continue to plague our communities. When violence is inflicted against a worshiper gathered for public celebration of an important and joyful holiday of her faith tradition, entire communities are traumatized. When violence is inflicted against a woman of color wearing the garments that express her religious identity, it sends a message of fear to all women who dare to take up space in public, to all persons of color who dare to be present on city streets, and to all adherents who dare to attire themselves in accordance with their values. Specifically, when violence is perpetrated against a Muslim woman of South Asian heritage who chooses to wear a hijab and attends a public religious observance, all Muslims, all immigrants, all persons of color, and all women are left feeling deeply vulnerable, unprotected, and unwelcome. This is unacceptable.

As the first Muslim woman elected to the Connecticut state legislature, and as a powerful advocate for equity at the Capitol, and as an educator in the special ed department at Weaver High School, Rep. Khan is a barrier-breaking leader in our community. But one should not have to be an elected official, or a teacher, or anything other than a human being to receive the full protection and dignity they deserve as a resident of our state. It is a fact that GHIAA and CLJ respect and admire Rep. Khan as a leader in our legislature. And, this attack would be equally repugnant and deserving of response if it had occurred against any other participant in Eid observances this week.

As an intentionally interreligious and multiracial organization, we believe that we are all harmed whenever any member of our community is attacked on the basis of their identity. Be it Islamophobia, antisemitism, racism, misogyny, xenophobia, or any other form of bigotry, CLJ and GHIAA are united in declaring that hate and violence have no place in our society. Such acts are unconscionable and are incompatible with the teachings of every one of our venerable religious traditions.

GHIAA and CLJ stand with Rep. Khan, with the Muslim community, with women, with immigrants, with the South Asian community, and with all who experience fear as a result of this violent act. We are committed to continuing our work for concrete change toward equity, safety, and flourishing for all who are targeted and marginalized by systemic injustice. The many and varied prayers of our diverse GHIAA community are united in common petition for healing of these emotional, physical, and spiritual wounds. May the God we know by many names, including the beautiful name Allah, bless Maryam Khan and her family, and all who suffer fear and violence, and all who join in the work of justice.