

Ellison calls for tolerance and understanding

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The disturbing mass shooting at a Wisconsin Sikh temple had prompted Minnesota Congressman Keith Ellison to call for tolerance and understanding of all cultures.

The alleged shooter, Wade Michael Page, 40, is said to have had ties with a white supremacist organization and may have targeted the temple because he believed the temple to be a Muslim house of worship.

Ellison, who himself is Muslim, released a statement calling for civility and healthy discourse among all United States residents.

“My thoughts and prayers are with the victims of this horrific act of violence and their community,” said Ellison. “It is particularly disturbing that the shooting occurred in a place of worship; where many Americans go for peace and prayer.”

The Minnesota Congressman, who was recently targeted by those on the extreme right, led by Rep. Michele Bachmann’s claims that Ellison may have ties to an organization of Muslim extremists – a claim Ellison vehemently denies – said we are more alike than we are different.

“Acts of violence like this remind us that, no matter our religion or ethnicity, we are one American family,” said Ellison. “While we do not know the shooter’s motivation, many Sikhs have been victims of hate crimes in recent years based on their appearance. We should all rededicate ourselves to the safety and security of our communities.”

According to Ellison, more than half a million Sikhs live in the United States, including over 250 families in Minnesota.

At the conclusion of a recent town hall hosted by the Congressman, Ellison asked everyone to stand and observe a moment of silence for the victims of the shooting.

At the time of press, six worshipers died in the shooting rampage with two still listed in critical condition. The alleged shooter was shot and killed by police.