



MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL of WESTERN NEW YORK
6343 Transit Rd. Depew, NY 14043

***THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL “THE TENT OF ABRAHAM”
Thursday, June, 16, 2016; Ramadan 11, 1437
Muslim Community Center (Islamic Center) 745 Heim Road, Amherst, NY***

This statement, presented at the Eleventh Annual “The Tent of Abraham”, organized by the Muslim Public Affairs Council of Western New York, is in response to the horrific mass shooting targeting LGBTQ patrons at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida in the early hours of Sunday, June 12, 2016. The attack in Orlando was an attack on all of us – the freedoms we enjoy and the diversity we embrace that has made this multi-faith “Tent of Abraham” gathering an annual reminder of who we are and what kind of nation we aspire to become.

- This hate crime has taken the lives of 49 and injured at least 53. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and we extend our deepest condolences to the families and friends of the victims of this barbaric attack in Orlando, Florida;
- We unequivocally state that such an act of hate-fueled violence has no place in any faith tradition or religion. As people of faith, we believe that all human beings have the right to safety and security and that each and every human life is inviolable.
- We join all Americans in general, and the LGBTQ community in particular, in expressing our profound outrage and grief at this carnage. Such acts of senseless violence violate all norms of human decency and must be uniformly condemned. Hate, bigotry and violence are not articles of any faith and are our common enemy;
- We will not allow the extremists to define us, mold us in their twisted and malevolent image or sow the seeds of discord among us. We know that the extremists who cause acts of violence do not represent Islam and the worldwide Muslim community has repeatedly condemned their actions. We are one people and, hence, in solidarity reject extremist aims and assert our shared humanity and mutual respect for the sanctity of human life;
- As people of faith and as Americans, we believe in religious freedom, civil rights, and human rights for all. We reject violence, hatred, and discrimination of anyone on the basis of race or ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation or national origin;
- As the Muslims among us observe the Holy Month of Ramadan, we note with appreciation their daily contributions to the military and law enforcement, and to the fields of medicine, education,

business, public service and all facets of our community life. We are inspired and cherish their critical part in the religious liberty that makes our community and our nation strong;

- We honored the memory of Muhammad Ali last week as one of the most beloved men in America. We remember him as a faithful Muslim, a man of conscience and a forceful advocate for peace and justice. Ali sacrificed his prime years as a professional athlete to stand against an unacceptable war that was taking the lives of Americans and Vietnamese. His principles and example encourage and inspire us to stand against extremism and violence in our time;
- We are grateful for and affirm the freedoms of expression and freedom to practice one’s religion that are enshrined in the Constitution of the United States and we gladly embrace the responsibilities entrusted to each citizen and to seek and uphold the democratic principles we cherish;

Signed on Thursday, June 16, 2016 (Ramadan 11, 1437) at the Muslim Community Center of WNY (Islamic Center) 745 Heim Road, Amherst, NY

Signatories:

Full Name

Affiliation (if any)

Signature
