Statement from SABA North America Regarding the Attempted Attack on Aurora, IL Hindu Temple

October 26, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SABA North America strongly condemns the attempted mass shooting targeting the Sri Venkateswara Swami (Balaji) Temple in Aurora, Illinois.

We are deeply disturbed by reports that this attack was motivated by racist ideology against the South Asian American community. It comes months after an attack on the Islamic Center of San Diego, in which three members of the Muslim community were killed, and weeks after a Sikh truck driver was attacked at a Wyoming rest stop. Reports identifying a dramatic increase in derogatory online posts and communications are also troubling, exposing South Asian children and adolescents to messages that normalize prejudice and target their communities.

In an environment where public discourse too often includes rhetoric that stigmatizes immigrants, religious minorities, and communities of color, we recognize that standing together is vital as we work to ensure that every American can enjoy constitutional protections and opportunities promised to all. According to law enforcement and public reports, the suspect who made threats against the Hindu temple also allegedly expressed hatred toward Jewish and Black communities. We stand in solidarity with the Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Black, Jewish American communities, and all those affected by a climate of fear and division. No one should fear violence because of their faith, ethnicity, race, national origin, or cultural identity.

We are grateful to the individuals who alerted law enforcement and to the authorities whose swift actions helped prevent what could have been a devastating tragedy. Places of worship must remain sanctuaries of peace, reflection, and community. Further, we support SABA Chicago's request in "urging governments at every level ... to strengthen hate prevention efforts." Each year, SABA North America urges members of Congress to support bills that would protect the civil rights and enhance the safety of communities targeted by hate crimes. Consistent with Congressman Krishnamoorthi's call for a federal hate-crime investigation of threats against the Aurora temple, we urge federal, state, and local law-enforcement authorities to thoroughly investigate all these incidents, including any evidence of hate-crime, civil-rights, or domestic-extremism violations. To quote Congressman Krishnamoorthi, whose family was present at the temple that day: "Every



American deserves to live and worship without fear, and we must stand together against hatred in all its forms."

We call on leaders, institutions, and community members to unite in protecting vulnerable communities, confronting extremism, and promoting understanding across religious, racial, and ethnic lines. We join our partners throughout the legal profession and beyond in reaffirming that hatred and bigotry have no place in our country, and that every individual deserves the right to live, worship, and thrive in safety and dignity. We remain committed to civic engagement, equality, and full participation in public life for all communities. As a nonpartisan organization, we encourage all eligible voters to stay informed, confirm their voter registration status, and participate in elections in accordance with their values and judgment.