Statement for CSI – CAI

**Following Rhode Island Superior Court Judge Maureen Keough’s August 24, 2023 decision involving Congregation Shearith Israel and Congregation Jeshuat Israel (CJI) concerning Touro Synagogue, the following joint statement is issued by:**

**Congregation Shearith Israel and Congregation Ahavath Israel of Newport**

August 29, 2023. In light of the decision of the Rhode Island Superior Court last week holding that Shearith Israel was within its rights to reclaim possession of Touro Synagogue, Shearith Israel is looking forward to working with Newport Congregation Ahavath Israel to keep Touro Synagogue open to all Jewish worshippers in the country’s oldest Jewish Synagogue. Louis Solomon, the Parnas (President) of Congregation Shearith Israel welcomed the Court’s ruling: “With our partners at Ahavath Israel, we are committed not only to reviving the Newport Jewish community but to reviving the place Touro Synagogue has in the hearts and minds of Jews all over America”, he said.

Congregation Shearith Israel is partnering with Congregation Ahavath Israel, a newly incorporated congregation with roots in Newport going back to 1915, to work together for the benefit of Touro Synagogue and its worshipers.

Solomon said Congregation Shearith Israel is excited about the future of Touro Synagogue under a new board of managers that will include both Shearith Israel and Ahavath Israel members as well as a board of overseers from greater Rhode Island and elsewhere in America. “We have a great many things to accomplish for the Newport Jewish community and for Touro Synagogue. Among other things, Rabbi Meir Soloveichik, Rabbi of Congregation Shearith Israel and acting Rabbi of Congregation Ahavath Israel, will deliver special lectures there. We want to have scholars there. We want people to come up for the summers there. CJI members are welcome and encouraged to attend services at Touro Synagogue whenever they like and become members if they wish. Now is a time to heal and a time to grow.”

Paul Tobak, President of Ahavath Israel, echoed Solomon’s comments. “Congregation Ahavath Israel and Congregation Shearith Israel welcome the entire Newport and greater Rhode Island Jewish community to join together in Touro Synagogue for prayer services and special programs. As we head into the High Holiday season, we extend wishes for a year of good health, peace, and success for the Touro Synagogue and the entire Newport community. We look forward to the future.”