

To Whom It May Concern:

On May 25, 2010, I was crossing the Windsor-Detroit Bridge when my two friends and I, alongside my infant daughter, were pulled over by border police. The border officer handed us an orange cards, at the time I did not understand what it meant, and he told us to proceed to the offices. When we entered, we were told to sit down and hand over our passports and drivers licenses. They asked us a series of questions about the nature of our trip and when were we coming back. We told them the purpose of our trip, which was to pay our condolences at funeral, and the return was within the same day. They continued then to fingerprint, photograph, and body search us. The main concern was the body search, which was highly uncomfortable, humiliating, and overall a traumatic experience. Two female officers were assigned to do the search—one officer conducting the physical search and the other to proceed over. The officer was rough and did not treat us with dignity. She touched every single inch of my body, which included my breast and private parts. They ask me to remove my scarf, but I refused. When asked why the search was being conducted, no explanation was given other than that it was a random search. I left the room visible shaken and upset. I felt, and still do, that my personal space was violated. I feel that I was unjustly singled out due to my ethnic and religious identity and background; because of that I was treated unfairly. We were the only individuals subjected to the search. Since that experience, I have limited my trips across because I am in fear that it will happen again. I have done nothing wrong, yet I don't know why I was treated like a criminal.

Sincerely,

Anonymous
(Muslim female of Somali origin)