This is my formal written complaint concerning my detention by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in my hometown of Port Huron, MI on December 28, 2009 at approximately 2am. I was racially profiled, harassed, and threatened by officers at the border crossing and was searched twice, handcuffed, put into a cell, put into a room to stand while handcuffed, and finally interrogated, all of which took 3 hours. The points of the complaint are as follows:

1. Racial Profiling:

   A. On December 28, 2009 immediately upon the driver stating that we (there were 4 males in the vehicle) were returning from the “Reviving the Islamic Spirit” conference in Toronto, was told to turn off the vehicle by the officer in the booth. He was not told to do this after the first two questions and was not asked any further questions. Such extra screening has happened disproportionally to practitioners of the Muslim religion upon crossing that border and we were told that this is taking place by one officer.

   B. I was questioned for one hour by Officer Plakas along with another officer on why I was attending a conference, what went on at the conference, what my religious beliefs and views were concerning the topics at the conference. The officers asked about my prior travels outside the Western Hemisphere as well as a specific description of the legs of the trip. I was also asked about my visas to middle eastern countries such as Oman and if I was involved with or trained with any countries military. The officers were cordial and professional in their treatment of me as it had seemed by now my name was cleared.

2. Harassed/Threatened:

   A. On December 28, 2009, I along with the 3 others who were in the vehicle were sitting in the waiting area, an officer came to us and yelled to one of my friends “What are you doing with that cell phone!” to which my friend replied “We were already searched outside and were allowed to keep it!” to which the officer yelled back “I don’t care what they did to you outside” as he came over and snatched the phone from him and came to me and yelled at me asking me if I had a phone to which I reached into my pocket and gave him my cell phone. He then yelled at my friend and instructed him to get up out of his chair and made him sit in another location away from me. Before leaving we asked to speak to a supervisor and mentioned to him this occurrence and the supervisor apologized and said this was not appropriate behavior.

   B. On December 28, 2009 after making me wait in the waiting area for 30 minutes, I was ordered to go inside to take off my shoes and be handcuffed and searched. Then I was asked to sit in a cell for another 40 minutes. Then I was handcuffed
again and I was asked to ‘sit’ in an empty room. When I said, there was no seat, I was told by the officer to “sit on the ledge”. When I told him that my hands were tied and couldn’t do that, and I would have to stand, I was made to stand in the room for 50 minutes handcuffed. As I was standing, different officers would walk by and smirk at me as if to make fun of me. I was told that I would go in for questions into another room and they ‘may or may not’ remove the handcuffs at that point.

C. The handcuffs were tied very tight on my hands and I had to ask for them to be eased.

3. Procedure:

A. On December 28, 2009 I was searched outside the vehicle before I entered the building. I then waited for 30 minutes in the waiting area sitting down. I could have continued waiting until my name was cleared, however, I was asked to go in the back where I was searched a second time while handcuffed and then put into a jail cell, and made to wait in a room handcuffed. There was no reason given for all this, when I was already searched and detained in the waiting area. On December 31, 2010 when this occurred I was made to sit in the waiting area for 1 hour and 40 minutes out of the 2 hours and 25 minutes in which I was detained. On this particular occasion, I was not searched twice and was not put in a jail cell, although I was put in the same room from before and had to stand handcuffed for an extensive period of time. Two different occasions, two different procedures being followed. When I asked, upon my release, what would happen if I circled around and entered Canada and came back, I was told that I would be subjected to detention, handcuffing, and questioning again notwithstanding they had just identified and cleared me.

B. On December 28, 2009, when we asked to speak to the supervisor in charge, we asked him what the procedure should have been. He proceeded by telling us that only I should have been handcuffed at the vehicle outside, then he went back later in the conversation and said that we all should have been handcuffed at the vehicle and brought into the building. He did not follow correct procedure in the fact that he is not supposed to tell us what the procedures are. Secondly, they got it wrong in terms of the correct procedure in how they were supposed to deal with me because either I should have been 1. handcuffed from the start at the vehicle or 2. detained in the waiting area like the others, and not searched again, handcuffed, placed in a cell, placed in a waiting room and questioned. However, I was both detained in the waiting area like the others for approximately 25 minutes (which I could have waited the entire time for them to clear my name) and then taken back to be searched yet again, placed in a cell, placed in a waiting room and finally questioned.