

Muslims confront government over travel woes

by [James Ewinger](#)

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PARMA, Ohio (RNS) Government officials told Arab-Americans and Muslims that some post-9/11 security measures are easing, and acknowledged that Muslims are often subject to a higher degree of discrimination in travel.

The two groups met Saturday (April 30) following conversations between Steven Dettelbach, the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, and local Muslims and Arab-Americans.

Dettelbach said the idea was to air concerns. He acknowledged at the start that "there is a headwind of intolerance that is in the face of this community."

Some of the 100 attendees expressed skepticism about the government's sensitivity to their concerns. One man, who said he was of Syrian origin, said he does not look like an Arab and is frequently waved through security but companions who appear to be Arab are pulled aside.

Razan Reed, a Canadian U.S. citizen of Lebanese birth, complained at length that she and her family have been harassed while entering the U.S. because of her husband's Islamic faith.

George Selim, a policy adviser with the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, said the department has strict policies against racial profiling. He said the agency is sensitive to the rights of citizens and has taken great strides to streamline security procedures.

Selim and Dettelbach both noted that Homeland Security modified the cumbersome National Security Entry/Exit Registration System so that foreign nationals no longer have to register and be subjected to interviews every time they enter the United States.