Trump tries to pull back from support for Muslim database

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Trump says he wants to keep a database of Syrian refugees – who he said he'd prefer to keep out of the United States entirely. The Republican presidential candidate made that clear at a Saturday campaign rally where he also promised to enact heavy surveillance on Muslim-Americans already living in the U.S.

"So here's the story, just to set it clear: I want surveillance of these people, I want surveillance if we have to, and I don't care", Trump added.

"I want surveillance of certain mosques, OK?"

Trump has pledged to be the toughest of all candidates toward people posing threats to the U.S. On Sunday said he would back ways to track Muslims in the USA and also bring back waterboarding on terrorism suspects. "I want surveillance. And you know what?" Trump additionally stated he wants a database on all Syrians refugees coming in to the USA, following the current, deadly assaults in Paris by which one suicide bomber allegedly came from war-torn Syria & entered France by foiling Europe's refugee vetting system. I know it might be not politically correct for you to talk about it, but there were people cheering as that building came down – as those buildings came down. "We've had it before and we'll have it again".

Trump was pressed on the idea of a registry by an NBC News reporter Thursday evening while the candidate campaigned in Iowa.

"Proposing a national gun registry is an attempt to create a precedent for interference with the right of every American to own, purchase and use guns for sport or to defend family and property", said a statement from Trump. "I think he's gonna make America great again, just like he says".

The House passed legislation this past week essentially barring Syrian and Iraqi refugees from the United States.

Trump also took the opportunity Saturday afternoon to employ a favorite tactic of his – hitting his rivals by listing what he sees as their flaws, all while declining to comment on them. The

libertarian Cato Institute's Ilya Shapiro said the idea violates basic privacy and liberty rights. "You can use neutral criteria to identify terrorists".

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders said Trump's words were "outrageous and bigoted". Retired neurosurgeon Carson, who has said that he would not support a Muslim for president, was repeatedly asked Friday whether he thought the country should track Muslims.

Interviewer: But that's something your White House would like to implement?

Ohio Gov. John Kasich said requiring people to register with the federal government due to their religion "strikes against all that we have believed in our nation's history".