

THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT



Safeguarding Liberty, Justice & the Rule of Law

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Conservative Leaders Request Quick Action on Privacy Board Nominees

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A group of conservative leaders assembled by The Constitution Project is urging the Senate Judiciary Committee to approve a bipartisan slate of five nominees to the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, so that the full Senate can quickly vote on their confirmation and the Board can finally come into existence.

"We do not consider [approval of the nominees] a partisan issue and hope that you do not either," the conservative leaders - including Asa Hutchinson, former Undersecretary in the Department of Homeland Security; former FBI Director William S. Sessions; former GOP Congressmen Mickey Edwards and Bob Barr; and David A. Keene, former chairman of the American Conservative Union - told members of the committee in a [letter released today](#).

Created by Congress based on the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, the board (also known as PCLOB) is intended to play a vital, independent role in overseeing the privacy and civil liberties implications of national security programs and policies.

"As conservatives, we fully support such oversight to ensure that we uphold our constitutional values and keep our government operating within its proper limits," the group wrote.

"Creation of the PCLOB is long overdue," they said.

In the five years since the legislation strengthening the board was signed into law in 2007 by then-President George W. Bush, no members have been confirmed to serve on the PCLOB and, as a result, the board does not presently exist. In a recent report card issued in conjunction with the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the members of the 9/11 Commission identified the government's failure to establish an operational privacy board as one of the group's nine major recommendations not yet implemented.

The Constitution Project (TCP) has long urged Congress and the president to create and staff an independent privacy board. The board was first created in 2004; three years later, Congress enacted legislation making it an independent agency and giving it subpoena power. However, it was not until December of last year that President Obama finally nominated a full slate of five candidates to serve on the Board.

A [copy of the letter](#) with the full list of signatories is available on the TCP website.

About The Constitution Project

Created out of the belief that we must cast aside the labels that divide us in order to keep our democracy strong, The Constitution Project (TCP) brings together policy experts and legal practitioners from across the political spectrum to foster consensus-based solutions to the most difficult constitutional challenges of our time. TCP seeks to reform the nation's broken criminal justice system and to strengthen the rule of law through scholarship, advocacy, policy reform and public education initiatives. Established in 1997, TCP is based in Washington, D.C.



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