

THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT



Safeguarding Liberty, Justice & the Rule of Law

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 20, 2010

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President Obama Urged to Fulfill Promise of Independent Privacy & Civil Liberties Oversight Board

WASHINGTON – The Constitution Project welcomes President Obama’s nomination of two members to serve on the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board (PCLOB): James X. Dempsey and Elisebeth Collins Cook. TCP urges the President to promptly name the remaining three members of the Board, and calls on the Senate to confirm all five members immediately. In 2007, Congress reconstituted the PCLOB as an independent agency within the Executive Branch, charged with reviewing the civil liberties impact of national security programs. However, since Congress passed the 2007 legislation to strengthen the Board’s powers and independence, no members have ever been confirmed to serve on the revamped Board, and it has not yet come into existence.

TCP has long urged that the President nominate, and the Senate confirm, a full five members to serve on the PCLOB, most recently, in TCP’s Liberty and Security Committee’s December 2010 report [*Principles for Government Data Mining: Preserving Civil Liberties in the Information Age*](#).

According to Sharon Bradford Franklin, Senior Counsel for TCP, “It has been over three years since Congress created this independent Board, and to date it remains an empty promise. The President’s two nominations are welcome, but only a first step. We urge him to nominate the remaining three Board members immediately, and call upon the Senate to promptly confirm all five members, so the Board can fulfill its critically important role in ensuring that our national security programs incorporate proper safeguards for civil liberties.”

Established in 1997, The Constitution Project (TCP) is known for its ability to bring together unlikely allies—experts and practitioners from across the political spectrum—in order to promote and safeguard America’s founding charter. TCP is working to reform the nation’s broken criminal justice system and to strengthen the rule of law by undertaking scholarship, advocacy, policy reform, and public education initiatives. TCP was born out of the belief that we must cast aside the labels that divide us, in order to keep our Constitution and our democracy strong.