

THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT



Safeguarding Liberty, Justice & the Rule of Law

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Task Force on Detainee Treatment Launched

WASHINGTON – The Constitution Project (TCP) announced the formation of a bipartisan Task Force on Detainee Treatment. The goal of the Task Force is to bring to the American people a comprehensive understanding of what is known and what may still be unknown about the past and current treatment of detainees by the U.S. government, as part of the counterterrorism policies of the Obama, Bush and Clinton administrations.

The Task Force will help policymakers and the public confront alleged past abuses—including torture and cruel treatment—by following the facts. As an ideologically diverse, objective, third party the Task Force is uniquely positioned to make sense of the vast quantity of information in the public domain. It will review this information, determine where the holes are and then pass the baton to the administration, Congress and ultimately—to the American people—who will determine what steps should be taken next.

According to TCP President Virginia Sloan, “The Task Force is an idea that took shape over a period of nearly two years, with support and input from a broad coalition of organizations and individuals with an interest in protecting America’s civil liberties and strengthening the rule of law.”

Asa Hutchinson, a Task Force Chair and the former Undersecretary of the Department of Homeland Security during the George W. Bush administration remarked, “This is a national security issue. We are still facing a real threat from terrorists and others who don’t trust or like us. It is in all of our interests to discover the truth, so that we can deal with the accusations, make whatever reforms may be needed, and strengthen America’s credibility on the world stage.”

The Task Force chairpersons and members are:

- Eleanor J. Hill - Task Force Chairperson; Partner, King & Spalding; Staff Director, Joint Congressional Inquiry on the September 11th attacks; Inspector General, Department of Defense, 1995-1999
- Asa Hutchinson - Task Force Chairperson; Senior Partner, Asa Hutchinson Law Group; Undersecretary, Department of Homeland Security during the George W. Bush administration, 2003-2005; Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration, 2001-2003; Member of Congress, (R-AR), 1997-2001; U.S. Attorney, Western District of Arkansas, 1982-1985
- Ambassador James R. Jones - Task Force Chairperson; Partner, Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP; Member of Congress (D-OK), 1973-1987; Ambassador to Mexico, 1993-1997
- Talbot “Sandy” D’Alemberte – Past President of the American Bar Association and Co-Founder of the ABA’s Central European and Eurasian Law Institute; President Emeritus of The Florida State University

- Richard A. Epstein - Laurence A. Tisch Professor of Law, New York University Law School; Peter and Kristen Bedford Senior Fellow, The Hoover Institution; Senior Lecturer, University of Chicago Law School
- Dr. David P. Gushee - Distinguished University Professor of Christian Ethics and Director, Center for Theology and Public Life, Mercer University
- Azizah al-Hibri - Professor, The T.C. Williams School of Law, University of Richmond; President, Karamah (Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights)
- Brigadier General David Irvine, USA (Ret.) - in the private practice of law' in Salt Lake City, Utah; Retired Army Reserve strategic intelligence officer; taught prisoner interrogation and military law for 18 years with the Sixth Army Intelligence School; served 4 terms as a Republican legislator in the Utah House of Representatives
- Judge William S. Sessions - Partner, Holland & Knight; Director of the FBI, 1987-1993; Chief Judge, 1980-1987, and Judge, 1974-1987, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas; U.S. Attorney, Western District of Texas, 1971-1974
- Gerald E. Thomson, MD - Lambert and Sonneborn Professor of Medicine Emeritus at Columbia University; Chair, Board of the Institute on Medicine as a Profession; Board Member, Physicians for Human Rights, 2005-10; President, American College of Physicians, 1995-96
- Judge Patricia M. Wald - Member, President's Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, 2004-2005; Judge, 1979-1999, and Chief Judge, 1986-1991, U.S. Court of Appeals for D.C. Circuit; Judge, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, 1999-2001

The following endorsers have also agreed to lend support to the TF members, staff, and the project:

- Wayne Budd - Senior Counsel at Goodwin Procter LLP; Associate Attorney General of the United States, 1992; United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts, 1989-1992
- Lee H. Hamilton - Director & Founder, The Center on Congress at Indiana University; Member, Homeland Security Advisory Council; President and Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1999-2010; Vice-Chair, 9/11 Commission, 2002-2004; Member of Congress, (D-IN), 1965-1999
- Alberto Mora - General Counsel of the Navy, 2001-2006
- William H. Taft IV - Legal Adviser to the U.S. Department of State, 2001-2005

TCP will oversee this initiative under the leadership of President Virginia Sloan and with the support of its staff. TCP is in the process of hiring a team dedicated solely to the work of the Task Force and expects the research and investigation phases of the project to begin in January, 2011. It is estimated that the Task Force will release its final report in 12-18 months.

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.