

THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT



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TCP's Sloan: Former CIA Officials Should 'Let Go' of Defending Torture

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Virginia Sloan, president of The Constitution Project, a bipartisan legal watchdog group, offered the following comment on the release today of a [purported "rebuttal"](#) to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence oversight report on the CIA's former "enhanced interrogation" program:

"This is a small group of former officials with deep ties to the torture program recycling many of the same old discredited defenses and justifications. They're out of step with the American people, with an overwhelming bipartisan majority of the Senate, and even with current CIA Director John Brennan -- all of whom have rejected the torture program. It's time they let go."

In his [June 2013 memorandum](#) transmitting the CIA's response to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence oversight report on the CIA's former "enhanced interrogation" program, Brennan said, "I personally remain firm in my belief that enhanced interrogation techniques are not an appropriate method to obtain intelligence and that their use impairs our ability to continue to play a leadership

role in the world." He further proclaimed it his "resolute intention never to allow any Agency officer to participate in any interrogation activity in which enhanced interrogation techniques would be employed."

Brennan [later conceded](#) that the CIA cannot show that torture produced even useful - much less uniquely valuable - intelligence. "The cause and effect relationship between the use of EITs and useful information subsequently provided by the detainee is, in my view, unknowable," he said.

In January 2015, The Constitution Project [released a poll](#) on Americans' attitudes towards torture. The poll found widespread disapproval across the political spectrum for "enhanced interrogation." The poll found similarly strong approval for strengthening U.S. laws against torture.

In June 2015, an overwhelming bipartisan majority of the Senate passed an amendment to the FY2016 National Defense Authorization Act that effectively repudiated the former "enhanced interrogation" program and prohibits its resurrection.

In April 2013, TCP's own [blue-ribbon bipartisan](#) Task Force on Detainee Treatment found that the treatment of many suspected terrorists in U.S. custody after 9/11 constituted torture, and that torture and cruel treatment were authorized at the highest levels of government. Many of the findings of the Senate Intelligence Committee report closely parallel those contained in [TCP's Task Force report](#).

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[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 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 through scholarship, advocacy, policy reform and public education initiatives. Established in 1997, TCP is based in Washington, D.C.