

CDT Urges White House to Move on PCLOB

November 11, 2009

Today, CDT and 28 other organizations [sent a letter to the White House](#) [1] asking that the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board (PCLOB) be reconstituted. The 9/11 Commission recommended the [creation of PCLOB](#) [2] in order to oversee the protections to civil liberties and privacy within the federal government, but the board has not been active since early last year. The board has a vital role as an independent advisor to the President and executive branch agencies in policy matters around privacy and civil liberties and providing oversight. However, the board [has not been active](#) [3] since early 2008.

PCLOB was established in 2004 and had one term, starting in 2006 – but the terms of the members of the board expired in January of last year, and President Obama has not nominated new members to the board. This letter asks President Obama to nominate members to the board quickly. Once members to the board are nominated, they must be confirmed by the Senate, and the office will need to be set up and staff must be hired. All in all, it will take months to reconstitute the board before it can begin advising the President and agencies.

Currently, the federal government lacks independent privacy oversight. Reconstituting PCLOB is one of the ways that privacy and civil liberties can [be better protected](#) [4] by the federal government. In fact, the [Cybersecurity Policy Review](#) [5] specifically called for PCLOB to be reconstituted, and possibly to expand its purview to include more cybersecurity topics, as an important oversight body. As an existing mechanism to protect privacy and civil liberties, it is an important and relatively simple way to provide oversight and advice for the government.

- [Security & Surveillance](#)
- [White House](#)
- [privacy](#)
- [PCLOB](#)
- [civil liberties](#)
- [Consumer Privacy](#)
- [board](#)

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Links:

[1] http://cdt.org/righttoknow/20091110_pclob_ltr.pdf

[2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Privacy_and_Civil_Liberties_Oversight_Board

[3] <http://techdailydose.nationaljournal.com/2009/05/what-ever-happened-to-pclob.php>

[4] <http://blog.cdt.org/2009/03/31/cybersecurity-its-us-and-them-not-us-vs-them>

[5] http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Cyberspace_Policy_Review_final.pdf