

Nov 04, 2016 by [Adam Clayton Powell, III](#)

BBG: Creating New CEO Requires Congress to Transfer ‘Certain Authorities’ from the BBG Board ^[1]

WASHINGTON -- Last month the White House and the Broadcast Board of Governors proposed legislation as part of BBG's FY2014 budget request to Congress that would create a new Chief Executive Officer who would supervise all U.S. international broadcasting, and I then filed a report based on a telephone conference call that followed the announcement.

On Friday afternoon, IBB Director Dick Lobo sent an email which contained an important clarification: The reason Congressional authorization is required for the new position is "there are certain authorities that belong exclusively to the Board under law that would have to be transferred to the CEO for the job to be as comprehensive as envisioned."

Here is the entire text of his message:

Adam,

Welcome back from China.

Thank you for your close interest in, and continued support for, U.S. international broadcasting. You do much to raise the profile of the BBG and to explore the issues that we face.

We appreciated your taking part in the telephone briefing about the agency's FY 2014 budget proposal on the day it was introduced. Your questions were among the most probing of all participants.

Members of our Board have since raised a concern about something I said during the briefing, as quoted in your April 19 item about the provision in the budget proposal to create a Chief Executive Officer position. I noted then that we could probably hire someone as a CEO without any legislation – a prospect that the Board supported late last year – but that the preferred path now is to engage Congress on this new provision. Unfortunately, I did not phrase that idea as artfully or succinctly as possible; the result risked creating the impression that the Board could have hired a CEO but was going to sit back and wait for Congress to make it happen. That is not the case, and I am writing to correct that impression.

As you know from our discussion and from the materials issued by the agency in connection with the budget proposal, creating a CEO position through legislation is a key priority for the BBG and the White House. The CEO would oversee day-to-

day operations of the BBG and its grantees. The Board has been pursuing this goal for more than a year. Legislation is clearly the way to go, since there are certain authorities that belong exclusively to the Board under law that would have to be transferred to the CEO for the job to be as comprehensive as envisioned. If you are considering writing on the CEO topic again, I would welcome the opportunity to clarify and provide additional detail.

Best regards,
Dick Lobo
Director, International Broadcasting Bureau
