

## **Donald Palmer Biography**

Donald Palmer serves as a Senior Legal Fellow for Election Integrity with the Heritage Foundation Institute for Constitutional Government. Palmer first joined Heritage in May 2026.

Before joining the Heritage Foundation, Palmer served as a Commissioner and Chairman on the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) after being nominated by President Trump and confirmed by unanimous consent of the Senate in 2019. He twice served as Chairman of the EAC and during his tenure the agency adopted enhanced security and accuracy standards in new voting machines. He advanced increased penetration testing of current voting systems and started a new program for the evaluation and testing of other election technology used in the states.

Palmer served as a senior election official in two states, as the Director of Elections in Florida and later as the Commonwealth of Virginia's Chief Election Official as Secretary of the Virginia State Board of Elections. He was a national leader in developing ways to improve interoperability and share voter registration data between states to increase the accuracy of the official voter rolls. He also modernized the Florida voting process by implementing a voting system of tabulating paper ballots and removing electronic machines.

Prior to his work in election administration, Don served as a trial attorney with the Voting Section in the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, where he investigated and enforced the nation's voting laws.

Don is a military veteran, retiring from the U.S. Navy after two decades as an intelligence officer and judge advocate general. He earned his Juris Doctor from the Stetson University College of Law in Saint Petersburg, Florida, and his master's in political management from George Washington University in Washington D.C.