

Charles “Cully” Stimson

Deputy Director, Edwin Meese III Center, Manager, National Security Law Program, and Senior Legal Fellow, Senior Advisor to the President

Areas of Expertise

Terrorism

Crime and Justice

Homeland Security

Immigration

Cully Stimson is a widely recognized expert in national security, homeland security, crime control, drug policy, and immigration.

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Charles “Cully” Stimson is a widely recognized policy expert in crime control, national security, immigration, homeland security, and drug policy at The Heritage Foundation. Stimson is Deputy Director of the Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies, Manager of the National Security Law Program, Senior Legal Fellow, and Senior Advisor to the President. He has also served as the Chief of Staff at Heritage three times and ran the transition for three Heritage presidential changes of command.

Stimson writes, lectures, and testifies on a wide array of policy issues such as the law of armed conflict, terrorist detainee policy, military commissions, criminal law and the death penalty, immigration and the war on drugs.

Stimson’s work in criminal law includes an Amazon top-rated book, [Rogue Prosecutors: How Radical Soros Lawyers Are Destroying America’s Communities](#), co-authored with Heritage Legal Fellow Zack Smith. Additionally, he wrote a comprehensive study on the constitutionality of life sentences for teen-age murderers entitled [Adult Time for Adult Crime](#); a ground-breaking paper detailing the inner workings of the military justice system compared to its civilian counterpart entitled [Sexual Assault in the Military: Understanding the Problem and How to Fix It](#); the use of DNA and third-party [genetics databases](#) to solve crimes and the fourth amendment; [The First Step Act](#); and more. His work on criminal and immigration law has been cited in briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court.

His work on national security issues includes a [paper](#) on the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force and its applicability to ISIS; a [paper](#) explaining FISA Section 702 and its importance in the collection of foreign intelligence; [issues](#) related to closing the terrorist detention facility at Guantanamo Bay Cuba; a [major paper](#) on why repealing the 1991 and 2002 Iraq war authorizations is

sound policy; and other papers. He testifies before the U.S. Senate and House on national security issues and [testified](#) most recently in December 2021 before the Senate Judiciary Committee on closing Guantanamo.

Stimson's work on immigration policy includes a novel paper entitled [Enforcing Immigration Law: What States Can Do to Assist the Federal Government and Fight the Illegal Immigration Problem](#); papers on how to reduce the [backlog](#) of cases in immigration courts, the need for immigration judges to have [contempt authority](#) and [summary disposition authority](#), and an agenda for immigration reform and [merit-based system](#) and more.

Before joining the think tank in 2007, Stimson served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Detainee Affairs. He advised then-Secretaries of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates and coordinated the Pentagon's global detention policy and operations, including at Guantanamo Bay and in Iraq and Afghanistan.

An accomplished trial lawyer, Stimson worked as a prosecutor in San Diego, Maryland, and as an Assistant United States Attorney in the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia. As a prosecutor, he concentrated on violent crimes such as homicide, sexual assault and domestic violence.

A third-generation naval officer, Cully served in the Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG) for 30 years, including three tours on active duty. During his active duty and reserve career, he served as a military defense counsel, prosecutor, as Deputy Chief Judge of the Navy-Marine Corps Trial Judiciary, and the Commanding Officer of the Preliminary Hearing Unit among other assignments. He retired from the Navy JAG Corps as a Captain on February 1, 2022, after 30 years of service.

Stimson's thousands of media interviews and appearances include Fox News Channel, MSNBC, CNN, BBC, NPR and C-SPAN. He has been quoted by most major newspapers, including The Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, and London Times.

A businessman and educator by training, Stimson is Chairman of his family's commercial real estate company in Seattle. Before 9/11, he was a Vice President at a New York-based global financial services and insurance brokerage firm where ran the private equity mergers and acquisitions D.C. operation.

Stimson holds a law degree from the George Mason University School of Law and was appointed by Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin to the George Mason University Board of Visitors in 2023 for a four-year term. He is a graduate of Kenyon College, where he was Captain of the men's varsity soccer team and an All-Conference player. He also studied at Harvard and Exeter universities. An avid soccer player, he served as Chairman of the Board of the United States Soccer Foundation three times and is currently the Chairman Emeritus of the Foundation. The U.S. Soccer Foundation is the charitable giving arm of U.S. Soccer.

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