

# Bloomberg

## Bitcoin Foundation Adds Ex-PayPal Lobbyist, Clinton Official

By Carter Dougherty

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The Bitcoin Foundation appointed [Jim Harper](#), a former lobbyist for EBay Inc.'s PayPal service, to be global policy counsel as the group seeks to persuade governments to let people use the virtual currency.

Harper, director of information policy studies at the [Cato Institute](#), is a former congressional staff member and adviser to the Department of [Homeland Security](#) on privacy and data security. The London-based Bitcoin group, which advocates for the currency's users and helps coordinate its development, announced his appointment in an e-mailed statement.

"The consensus policy that the foundation has produced -- maximizing the benefits of Bitcoin while managing the risks -- is something we'll work to see governments around the world adopt," Harper said in the statement.

Bitcoin is the most popular of a group of digital currencies that have no central issuing authority, use a public ledger to log every transactions and employ a network of volunteer computers to ensure coins cannot be spent twice.

The underlying software was created by an anonymous person or group in 2009, Satoshi Nakamoto, and it has traction with merchants selling for its lower costs. It also has been used to facilitate illegal transactions, which has drawn the attention of law enforcement worldwide.

Since the U.S. government has generally adopted the policy that Bitcoin is an innovative technology whose risks can be managed, "My work will be to go around the world and make sure other governments see it the same way," Harper said in an interview. Sixty percent of the foundation's members are outside the U.S., he said.

## Dethroning Currency

Bitcoin's potential as a payments system, as opposed to a currency that will dethrone the [U.S. dollar](#), will be the "leading point" of his lobbying, Harper said.

"I don't think it's likely it will topple a major currency, but competing with them will provide huge benefits," he said.

The Bitcoin Foundation also hired [Amy Weiss](#) as a media consultant. She previously worked in media relations at the White House under President [Bill Clinton](#) and as communications director at the [Democratic National Committee](#). She will remain chief executive officer of Washington-based Weiss Public Affairs.

Weiss's main goal will be "explaining and educating policymakers and opinion leaders as to what Bitcoin is and what it isn't," she said. In particular, Weiss said, she will emphasize that Bitcoin is not entirely anonymous.