

## Bitcoin Foundation ramps up lobbying efforts with high-profile hires

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The Bitcoin Foundation, one of the world's leading advocacy groups for the cybercurrency, has bolstered its ranks with two high-profile hires with experience pushing agendas on Capitol Hill.

With the hire of Jim Harper, an official at the libertarian policy organization the Cato Institute and former counsel to U.S. Senate and House committees, the Bitcoin Foundation is pumping up its lobbying efforts. Harper has also provided government relations counsel to PayPal and other companies in tech, telecom and e-commerce, and was also a member of the Department of Homeland Security's Data Privacy and Integrity Advisory Committee. The foundation hopes his resume and experience in Washington will help make him a strong bitcoin advocate and convince Congress and regulatory leaders to allow the currency to circulate uninhibited throughout the global economy.

As Global Policy Counsel, Harper "will lead efforts to identify political impediments to Bitcoin adoption, and build confidence in Bitcoin among governments around the world," the foundation said in a news release on Tuesday.

The Bitcoin Foundation, which has offices in Washington, D.C., also announced on Tuesday the hire of Amy Weiss, a public relations consultant who worked as deputy press secretary and deputy assistant in the Clinton White House. Weiss will remain in her PR wheelhouse and help with global media relations for the foundation.

Bitcoin could use a little positive PR these days. The stability and longevity of the virtual currency, which exists outside of government and bank regulation, has been in question since one of the largest bitcoin exchange, Japan-based Mt. Gox, recently filed for bankruptcy after losing 750,000 of its customers' bitcoins. Mt. Gox says it was part of an attack by hackers, but traders allege the operation was a fraud and its bankruptcy claim a ruse.

In yet another bizarre case in the bitcoin world, a young American in Singapore, who headed the bitcoin exchange First Meta Pte Ltd, apparently committed suicide last week. And in a recent article that some say shrouded the bitcoin world in even more mystery, a Newsweek piece claims

to have identified the creator of Bitcoin, although he never actually said he was the mastermind of the virtual currency.