

**John Light Napier**  
**Pawleys Island, South Carolina**  
**Former United States Congressman and Federal Judge**  
**Former U.S. Senate Committee Counsel**  
**Former Special Outside Counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Complex Litigation - Strategic Public Policy Advice**

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John L. Napier is an attorney and governmental relations consultant. He is a former United States Congressman and Federal Judge.

He was born in Bennettsville, South Carolina on May 16, 1947, son of John Light and Miriam Keys Napier. He grew up and attended public school in Blenheim and graduated from Bennettsville High School in 1965 before attending Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina where he graduated in 1969.

After his marriage to Pam Caughman in 1971 and graduation from the University of South Carolina law school in 1972, Napier began a legal career in Washington, D.C. that included a series of assignments in the United States Senate. His initial job was the Chief Republican counsel for the U.S. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure, which was the first U.S. Senate committee to investigate Watergate before the matter was turned over to the Select Committee.

Through the mid 1970's, he served in a variety of other senior assignments in the Senate. He was Chief Legal Counsel and Chief Legislative Assistant to U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond. In 1977, the U.S. Senate did not have a written Code of Ethics or written Code of Financial Disclosure and formed a special committee to undertake this task. Napier was named the lead Republican Counsel for the Senate Special Committee on Official Conduct. This special Senate committee wrote the first ethics and financial disclosure code for the United States Senate.

Upon returning to his hometown in 1978 he entered the private practice of law. He was active in community affairs where he led the United Way campaign and was president of the historical society.

In 1980, he was elected to the United States Congress where he was a Deputy Whip and served on the House Agriculture Committee, its influential subcommittee on conservation and credit, and the Veterans Affairs Committee. He was widely credited, along with his close friend Congressman Charlie Rose (D-NC), with putting together the bi-partisan coalition to save the tobacco price support program, setting the stage for orderly federal buyouts of the allotments and preserving economic stability for the region's major agricultural industry.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan nominated Napier to be a judge on the United States Court of Federal Claims in Washington, a national federal trial court. He was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate. In this assignment, he sat on a sixteen-member court with jurisdiction for complex business litigation brought against the federal government (takings, tax refunds, patents, government contracts, many involving sensitive defense and intelligence issues).

Upon request of the Chief Judge of the Court, his colleagues asked Napier to chair a special committee of the Court to review and restructure its administrative and finance offices, which resulted in an internal reorganization of the Court's offices.

In 1989, Napier resigned his judicial commission to return to the private practice of law and government relations in Washington, D.C. Over his career, he has practiced with a three-person firm (Goldberg, Cottingham, Easterling and Napier), a two-person firm (Napier and Jennings), a regional firm in its Washington office (McNair and Sanford), and a national and international firm (Winston & Strawn). Since 2003 he has been engaged in solo practice representing private, public and association clients before the Congress, government agencies, and other public bodies.

His legal practice has been diverse, representing clients as varied as federal judges associations; State agencies, including the SC Department of Transportation and the South Carolina State Ports Authority in their federal work; county and city governments; economic development agencies; national corporations and associations; as well as the famed trial lawyer F. Lee Bailey. In 2005 he began a long representational relationship with both Horry County and the Myrtle Beach International Airport in advising on their intergovernmental affairs and community relations activities. He has served as the general counsel for CARE, the Coalition for Auto Repair Equality, comprised of the CEOs in the national automobile aftermarket industry (AutoZone, NAPA-Genuine Parts, Advance, O'Reillys, Bridgestone-Firestone) since 1992.

With his longtime friend and colleague J. Edward Bell, retired federal magistrate judge George Kosko, and former United States Army Judge Advocate General Hugh R. Overholt, Napier was a part of the original group to develop, draft and shepherd through the Camp Lejeune Justice Act at the United States Marine Corps base in North Carolina. A decade plus effort, this landmark legislation grants a new cause of action and legal remedy under federal law for the victims of the horrific water contamination at Camp Lejeune from 1953 to 1987. It is a component of the PACT Act which was signed into law by President Biden in August, 2022.

His long-time national client, the Federal Magistrate Judges Association, honored him in 2011 with the association's most prestigious honor, "The Founders Award," for his advice and counsel on federal executive and legislative issues. At the time he was one of only 43 individuals so honored with this award in the long history of the organization, including two Chief Justices and other jurists and lawmakers, each recognized as having made "... lasting contributions to the United States courts."

Active in politics, except when he was on the bench, Napier was a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1984. His advice and counsel has been sought over the years by a variety of state and national political campaigns. Aside from being a candidate in three elective congressional campaigns, in 1984 he was a chair of the Reagan-Bush campaign in South Carolina. In 1990, he was co-chair of South Carolina Governor Carroll Campbell's re-election campaign and in 1991 co-chaired the Governor's Inaugural Committee. In 2012, he was involved in the Presidential Primary victory for Speaker Newt Gingrich in the South Carolina Primary as State co-chair and as a national campaign surrogate and advisor.

In 1992, he accepted an appointment to serve as Special Outside Counsel to the United States House of Representatives' committee investigating financial irregularities and political involvement in the Post Office at the U.S. House of Representatives. This investigation led to numerous changes in the House of Representatives' internal operations.

He served on the Grievance and Discipline Committee for the South Carolina Supreme Court and the National Advisory Committee for the Court of Federal Claims. He is admitted to practice in South Carolina and in the District of Columbia and is listed in "Who's Who in America" and "Who's Who in American Law." He holds Martindale Hubbell's "av" rating in peer review.

Napier is a recipient of the "Order of the Palmetto," South Carolina's highest civilian honor. He is a frequent speaker on the intersection of government and business. Four of his speeches on public policy have been published in "Vital Speeches of the Day," the national publication highlighting the most provocative and relevant speeches delivered each month on public affairs. His public papers are at Clemson University and oral histories are at the South Carolina Political Collections at the University of South Carolina, whose website describes him as "a pioneer" in developing two-party politics in the State.

He was an organizer and served on the initial board of directors of Coastal Carolina Bancshares, Inc. and Coastal Carolina National Bank in Myrtle Beach, S.C., serving as treasurer of the holding company. He complements his professional interest in the law, public policy, and government with an avocational interest in history and books. He sat on the Board of Managers of the South Carolina Historical Society, where he served as its secretary and as a member of its executive committee for a number of years. He also has been a member of the board for the Palmetto Conservation Foundation, the Institute for Southern Studies at the University of South Carolina. He is on the Advisory Board for the McNair Center for Government and History at Francis Marion University, and the national advisory council for the International Conservation Caucus Foundation, comprised of The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund.

Napier participated in the ROTC program at Davidson and served as a commissioned officer in the United States Army and Reserves as First Lieutenant in the Air Defense Artillery. Raised in the Southern Baptist tradition and baptized as a member of Thomas Memorial Baptist Church, he joined the Presbyterian Church in 1978 and was ordained an elder in First Presbyterian Church in Bennettsville, SC in 1979.

By party affiliation Napier is a Republican and describes his political philosophy as conservative inclusiveness, best summed up by the historian William E. Pemberton in recounting the presidency of Ronald Reagan. In an account of a White House political strategy debate on corporate tax breaks in the 1982 tax bill among the Republican Whip teams, Pemberton relates a colloquy Napier engaged in with his then colleague Dick Cheney: *"Senator Bob Packwood (Rep., Ore) warned against trying to build a party on white Anglo-Saxon males over forty. There aren't enough of us left. Congressman John L. Napier (Rep., S.C.) put it more simply: 'There are a lot more little people than there are rich people.'"*\* In further defining his politics, Napier often cites Senator Howard Baker's admonition that we all have a duty to listen in any debate before making a decision because "the other fellow just might be right."

He and his wife, Pam, now live in Pawleys Island, S.C., and divide their time between South Carolina and Washington, D.C. They have one daughter, Page Napier Morris, who resides in Washington, D.C. with her husband, Alex Morris, and the Napier's granddaughters, Mollie and Katherine.

\*Pemberton, Exit With Honor. The Life and Presidency of Ronald Reagan, p. 140 (1998), citing White House Office of Records Management, ID 056123 December 14, 1981.