



Richard Fontaine is a Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), which he joined in September 2009. He previously served as foreign policy advisor to Senator John McCain for more than five years. He has also worked at the State Department, the National Security Council and on the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

During his tenure with Senator McCain, Fontaine helped draft the Detainee Treatment Act, the ADVANCE Democracy Act and the 9/11 Commission Report Implementation Act, among numerous other pieces of foreign policy legislation. He served as foreign policy advisor to the McCain 2008 presidential campaign and, following the election, as the minority deputy staff director on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Fontaine served as associate director for Near Eastern affairs at the National Security Council (NSC) from 2003-04, during which time he worked on political and economic reform in the Middle East and in support of the special presidential envoy on Iraqi debt. He previously worked as a policy analyst in the NSC's Asian Affairs directorate, where he covered Southeast Asian issues and contributed to multilateral diplomacy in the lead-up to the 2003 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum in Bangkok.

During his time at the State Department, Fontaine worked in the office of former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and in the department's South Asia bureau, working on issues related to India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

Fontaine began his foreign policy career as a staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, focusing on the Middle East and South Asia. He also spent a year teaching English in Japan. A native of New Orleans, Fontaine graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. in International Relations from Tulane University. He also holds a M.A. in International Affairs from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, and he attended Oxford University.

Fontaine lives in Falls Church, Va., with his wife and three children.