

Richard L. Cañas

Director

New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness

On March 16, 2006, Governor Jon S. Corzine created a cabinet-level Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness in the Governor's Office and appointed Richard "Dick" Cañas as the office's first director.

Cañas comes to his new position after eight years in the private sector, following a career spanning 34 years in law enforcement, intelligence, counter terrorism and policy making at the national level.

From 1998 to his appointment by Governor Corzine, Cañas served as a Director at the nonprofit Concurrent Technologies Corporation, where his main focus was on developing open source information and technology to support the country's emergency response community.

Between 1996 and 1998, Cañas served as Director of the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) at Johnstown, Pennsylvania. During his tenure, NDIC was recognized as the lead agency for national strategic intelligence on the threats posed by drugs, gangs and violence. From 1994 to 1996, he served as the Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA's) Phoenix, Arizona Divisional Office. Prior to that, also in 1994, Cañas was assigned by the DEA as Special Assistant to the Latin American section of the Central Intelligence Agency.

On detachment from the DEA, Cañas served from 1990 to 1994 on the White House's National Security Council (NSC). He was first appointed to the NSC in 1990 by President George H. W. Bush as Director for Counternarcotics. In 1992, following the change of administration, Cañas was asked to remain at the NSC, where he served as the Director for Counterterrorism and Counternarcotics under President Bill Clinton. During this period, Cañas also served as the Chair of the NSC's Coordinating Sub Group for Counterterrorism, which monitored several skyjackings as well as the first terrorist attack on the World Trade Center.

Beginning in 1972, Cañas served as a Special Agent of the DEA, where for the next 24 years he worked his way up through the ranks. While with the DEA, Cañas was used

extensively by the State Department and the CIA as a special advisor on sensitive foreign terrorist activities

Prior to joining DEA, Cañas served as a patrolman and detective for the City of Salinas, California.

During his diverse career, Cañas received numerous awards including eight Excellence in Management Awards from the DEA, and three Presidential Letters of Commendation.

Cañas is a graduate of the California State University at San Jose, where he received a B.A. in Law Enforcement Administration. He also holds a California Board of Education Lifetime Technical Teaching Credential from the University of California, Berkeley. Cañas also attended the Alameda County Police Academy in Santa Rita, California, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Academy in Washington, D.C., and State Department Foreign Service Institute Counterdrug Training in Rosslyn, Virginia.

Cañas was born in El Salvador and is fluent in Spanish. He is married to the former Elaine Betts Smith of Virginia and currently resides in Hamilton Township, Mercer County.