

Abbreviated Biography of John T. Willis, J.D.

John T. Willis is currently a Senior Executive in Residence in the College of Public Affairs at the University of Baltimore and a Senior Research Associate with the Schaefer Center for Public Policy. Professor Willis served as the Director of the Undergraduate Program in Government and Public Policy at the university from 2005 to 2013. He has taught courses since 1999 in *American Public Policy, Interest Group Politics and Lobbying, Maryland Government and Politics, Media and Government, Problem Solving in Public Administration, Public Budgeting and Personnel Management, State and Local Government, Urban Politics and Public Policy*, and *U.S. Campaigns and Elections*. He previously taught courses as an adjunct professor in the Economics and Business Administration Department of Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College) from 1979 to 1994 and, in 2005, taught courses at McDaniel College-Budapest in Hungary.

Professor Willis has conducted extensive research on Maryland political history, elections and demographics and has authored several publications and significant reports. He is the author of **Presidential Elections in Maryland**, a contributing author to **Western Maryland: A Profile**, and the co-author of **Maryland Politics and Government**, published in 2012 by the University of Nebraska press as part of a national state series that is used in several Maryland colleges and universities. A widely respected authority on Maryland's political history and electorate, Professor Willis is a frequent contributor to broadcast and print media and has testified on numerous occasions before federal and state legislative and executive committees. He is also the managing editor of *Election Administration Reports*, a biweekly newsletter that is read by election officials throughout the United States and in other countries.

From 1995 to 2003, Professor Willis served as the Secretary of State for the state of Maryland. As Maryland Secretary of State, Professor Willis was responsible for the administration and supervision of over fifty constitutional, statutory, regulatory, customary and traditional functions and services. The secretary of state is a state constitutional officer and a statutory member of the governor's cabinet representing the executive branch of government and the state of Maryland on a variety of advisory boards, committees, task forces. He also served as a liaison between the executive branch and local elected officials within the state as well as officials from other states and countries. Special assignments during his tenure included designing and managing Maryland's Census 2000 efforts to coordinate with the U.S. Census Bureau and chairing the Governor's Redistricting Advisory Committee in 2001-2002. As an active member of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), Secretary Willis served as a Regional Vice President, Chair of the International Relations Committee and Vice Chair of the Elections and Voter Participation Committee.

Professor Willis also served as the Chief of Staff to the County Executive of Prince George's County from 1990-1994. As Chief of Staff of a large, racially diverse, multi-ethnic, urban county, he was responsible for all intergovernmental functions and the supervision of employees engaged in public relations, legislative liaison, community relations and constituent service. Professor Willis represented Prince George's County in regional, state and national organizations and affairs, including active participation in the

Washington Council of Governments and the legislative committee of the Maryland Association of Counties.

Since 1972, Professor Willis has been a member of the Maryland State Bar Association. He is also a member of the Carroll County Bar Association and a member of the Section on State and Local Government Law and the Section on Real Property of the Maryland State Bar Association. Professor Willis has engaged in the practice of law in a variety of positions and is currently providing counsel to the Baltimore City County Council in its consideration of a comprehensive effort to rewrite the city ordinance related to zoning and land use. During his legal career, Professor Willis has represented clients and handled cases before a variety of boards, commissions, courts and other government entities throughout the state of Maryland. He has also argued cases before the Maryland Court of Special Appeals and the Maryland Court of Appeals as well as federal district courts and circuit courts of appeals. Several of his appellate cases resulted in precedent setting standards including *Schultz v. Pritts*, 291 Md. 1 (1981) which established the controlling law for conditional uses and special exceptions in county and municipal zoning ordinances.

Professor Willis is actively engaged not only in academic work related to elections but also in various program development and implementation for the administration of elections. Before the passage of the 2002 Help America Vote Act, Professor Willis was invited to present testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation and the Congressional Black Caucus. At the University of Baltimore, Professor Willis designed and supervised the grants awarded to the University of Baltimore by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission under the Help America Vote College Program during the 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010 election cycles which recruited, trained and placed college students as election judges and election assistants. Professor Willis also designed and managed the election judge training programs for Baltimore City (since the 2006 general election through the 2016 election cycle) and for Baltimore County (during the 2004 to 2010 election cycles) which have trained nearly 40,000 individuals to serve as election judges at precinct polling locations on election days. Most recently, Professor Willis was the principal investigator and author of a 110 page report on "Voting and the Administration of Elections in Maryland" which was completed by the Schaefer Center for Public Policy for the Maryland State Board of Elections and submitted to the Maryland General Assembly during its 2014 regular session. After the 2014 elections, Professor Willis presented another report to the Maryland General Assembly during its 2015 regular session entitled, "Wait Time Observations from the Maryland 2014 General Election." In addition, Professor Willis has been a panelist, member and chair of numerous workshops, committees, symposiums, task forces and research projects related to the conduct of elections in Maryland and throughout the country.

Professor Willis received his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Bucknell University (*cum laude*) and his Juris Doctor from the Harvard Law School, with an emphasis on Constitutional Law. He is married to Dr. Kathy S. Mangan, Professor of English at McDaniel College and a published poet. Professor Willis is immensely proud of his three grandchildren, son and daughter.