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## From the Editor

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## FROM THE EDITOR

With this issue, *NEW DIMENSIONS IN LEGISLATION* expands in format to the status of a full law journal. The members of the Notre Dame Legislative Bureau feel that *NEW DIMENSIONS* has thus begun to truly fill the need for a journal of legislative law to retrospectively examine, and prospectively reform the "other side" of the law.

The Notre Dame Legislative Bureau has accepted four projects for the academic year, which will often be reflected in the pages of *NEW DIMENSIONS*. The first project, under the Public Interest Research Section, is assisting in developing legislative proposals, providing empirical research, and providing legal assistance to local mental health organizations in achieving their goal of equal protection of the law to the mentally retarded in the area of education.

The Legislative Bureau also is involved in assisting several American Indian Tribes, in cooperation with the Notre Dame Legal Aid Bureau, in drafting a Model Indian Tribal Code. This project is of special interest, since there has never been such a code developed by the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs, despite their mandate to do so.

The Bureau has also been requested to codify the ordinances of a small city in Michigan, and is expected to complete this project within the next three months. Similar involvement in Michigan law is reflected in the attempt of the Bureau to secure passage of an act providing for the non-partisan primary nomination of Michigan Supreme Court Justices, included in this issue.

It is the hope of the Legislative Bureau that these projects, in conjunction with the publication of *NEW DIMENSIONS*, will provide a focal point for law reform in a legislative manner. For too long the concept of law reform has been linked with the development of judicial legislation on a case-by-case basis, with reaction setting in to such decisions via the legislative process. Rather, law reform must also be concerned with utilizing the often more satisfactory forums of the legislatures to achieve progressive legislation. Yet too often, burdened by limited budgets, state and local legislators cannot obtain truly independent analysis and drafting of legislative proposals. It is this need which the Notre Dame Legislative Bureau and *NEW DIMENSIONS* seek to fill. The Bureau stands ready to assist governmental and private bodies in proposing legislation which is carefully drafted and considered, especially with regard to practical and legal limitations, thus enabling the legislature concerned to more adequately consider the proposal.

*NEW DIMENSIONS* assists in this concept by reaching lawyers, legislators, and private organizations that otherwise would have less ability to consider proposals treated in the pages of *NEW DIMENSIONS*. Through review of the state of the law, as well as by the proposals for model legislation, *NEW DIMENSIONS* hopes to have a viable impact upon legislative reform.