

FOREWORD

Since 1965, Notre Dame law students have assisted legislators, public interest groups, agencies, and other organizations in researching and drafting legislation. In the beginning, the Student Legislative Bureau was the organization through which Notre Dame law students researched and drafted legislation. In 1970, the organization was renamed the Legislative Research Service, and the new organization shifted its focus to publishing the results of student and faculty research.

In 1971, *New Dimensions in Legislation*, the precursor to the *Journal of Legislation*, became the primary vehicle for publishing the student and faculty research projects of the Legislative Research Service. By 1974, the growing reputation of the Legislative Research Service and its publication contributed to the creation of a second law review at Notre Dame, the *Journal of Legislation*. Since then, the *Journal* has supplanted the Legislative Research Service. In addition to publishing the well-researched notes of Notre Dame law students, the *Journal* also publishes articles from a diverse group of authors including legislators, professors, and people involved in policymaking and national affairs.

In an effort to provide the Congress of the United States with recommendations for legislative change, the editorial board and staff for volume 20 of the *Journal of Legislation* are pleased to introduce the Legislative Reform Section. While many individuals believe that the law is extant and specific, the reality is that the law is anything but extant and specific. As words should mean what they say, judges would seem to have an easy task in interpreting the law. Volumes of case law, however, demonstrate how easily thirteen circuit courts of appeals can interpret the same language in a statute differently.

The purpose of the Legislative Reform Section is to examine splits in the circuit courts of appeals and to recommend how Congress can resolve conflicting interpretations. In resolving the splits in the circuits, Congress can ensure that the law is administered fairly and equally throughout the United States. The Legislative Reform Section also intends to examine the language in new statutes which may create future litigation and cause problems of interpretation for the courts in the future.

The editorial board and staff for volume 20 of the *Journal of Legislation* hope that the Legislative Reform Section will provide the impetus for congressional amendments which would resolve the conflicting interpretations over statutory language. The Legislative Reform Section will contain short pieces which will identify statutory language which the circuit courts of appeals have interpreted differently. The author will present the different interpretations and the reasoning by which the courts arrived at their different interpretations. Finally, the author will recommend how Congress can resolve the conflict by amending the statute.

The editorial board and staff of the *Journal of Legislation* would welcome any feedback regarding the Legislative Reform Section. Moreover, the editorial board and staff invite any suggestions for topics. If a member of Congress or anyone involved in policymaking would like research of a particular issue conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the *Journal of Legislation*.

