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Introduction

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Anyone who has studied the legislature understands that the lawmaking process is one contingent on the delicate balance of tenacity and compromise. This year's *Review of Selected California Legislation* has undergone a process of evolution that we hope will reflect the delicate balance of tenacity and compromise so essential to the function of the Legislature.

The first major change implemented this year was to reduce the number of student writers participating in this annual review of California legislation. This reduction was necessary to ensure that each writer was able to research and write a scholarly review on a significant piece of California legislation. In years past, the number of student writers was so large as to virtually ensure that the content of many bills chosen for analysis were not interesting, important, or beneficial to the landscape of California law. Consequently, as a result of the staff reduction, we feel that this year's smaller student staff has had the opportunity to research and write on topics of much greater importance to the entire State of California.

Another change that was implemented this year, as a direct corollary to the staff reduction, involved the bill selection process. As mentioned above, in prior years many bills were selected for review merely to ensure that the large staff "had enough work to do." This year we purposefully limited the number of bills assigned to each writer to allow the writers the necessary time to research and draft Legislative Notes which follow this introduction adequately. The bills that were chosen this year reflect "the biggest and the best" of California legislation for the 1996 term.

In conjunction with the staff reduction and bill selection modifications, the staff was actually assigned fewer bills than in years past. Also, this change was designed to enhance the final product contained in this Review. As a direct result of better bill selection, smaller staff size, and fewer bills per writer, this year's publication has focused on the most important changes to California law and hopefully, will provide you, the subscriber, with the necessary legislative history and insight needed for your individual endeavors.

Perhaps the most noticeable change to regular readers of this Review will be that many bills have been grouped together to form a more comprehensive review of selected areas of California legislation. For example, if this year's legislature hypothetically enacted two or three bills affecting the banking industry within the state, the bills would have been combined together and written on as a single unit. We believe this new format will help to ensure that significant changes in the law will be tracked and understood more easily by our subscribers.

Other than these important technical changes, one important stylistic change was also incorporated into this Review. This change, by far, is the most important one implemented. This year, the student writers were given more control over their individual Legislative Notes and were encouraged to evaluate the bill topic independently and write candidly on the effect the bill would have on its respective area of law. This seemingly minor change was actually an institution-changing decision.

Typically, this publication allowed student writers to comment only on what the bill specifically accomplished. Each sentence within the previous issues of this Review was required to have citation to support the statement made. This strict requirement virtually eliminated any actual intellectual comment or critique. However, this year, each student writer was encouraged to research the area of law thoroughly, to compare and contrast the California law with that of other jurisdictions, and to gauge, based on the research results, the actual strengths and weaknesses of the new California enactment.

We believe the new management style combined with this new write-up style will improve the actual worth of this *Review of Selected California Legislation* greatly. We believe that our writers have provided a meaningful and timely analysis of current California legislation that will not only help those seeking legislative history, but also help the casual reader seeking to understand “what” the California Legislature has done.

On behalf of the staff writers, editors, and advisors, we proudly present the *Pacific Law Journal's* twenty-eighth annual *Review of Selected California Legislation*. As always, we encourage and anticipate feedback from our readers. Please direct any comments or suggestions to the *Pacific Law Journal's* Legislation Department, (916) 739-7036.

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Chief Legislation Editor