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UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE LAW FORUM

VOLUME FORTY

FALL 2009

NUMBER ONE

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

To the Maryland Legal Community:

The editorial board of the *University of Baltimore Law Forum* proudly presents the first issue of the 2009-2010 academic year. Every year, the *Law Forum* aims to provide our readers with thought-provoking articles and recent developments covering a wide array of legal issues. The *Law Forum* staff has dedicated countless hours to ensure that our fall issue carries on this tradition.

In this, *Law Forum's* fortieth year as a journal, we fittingly begin with an article written by the Honorable Arrie W. Davis, Senior Judge on the Court of Special Appeals of Maryland. An alumnus of our law school, his Honor recently celebrated a fortieth anniversary of his own—as a member of the Maryland Bar. In his article, Judge Davis draws from the recent confirmation hearings for Justice Sonia Sotomayor and discusses the role that empathy and life experience should play in a judge's decision-making process. In doing so, he weaves in his own life experience, as well as those of jurists on the Supreme Court and the appellate courts of Maryland to create a truly informative and inspiring piece.

The next article, authored by another esteemed alumnus of our law school, the Honorable Dana M. Levitz and his former law clerk, Ephraim Siff, makes a compelling argument for a complete overhaul of the current selection and election process for circuit court judges in Maryland. Judge Levitz and Mr. Siff leave no stone unturned as they methodically point out the current system's inadequacies and present numerous proposals for reform.

In the third article, Professor Darrell VanDeusen and Donna Glover provide an excellent analysis of the recently amended Maryland Flexible Leave Act. Their article posits that, despite improvements to the Act, confusion regarding its application still exists. As a result, the authors warn that employers and employees may have to wait several years for clarification from the judiciary if interpretive regulations are not issued.

With the fourth and final article, Joshua Friedman and Gary Norman address the current status of Maryland's domestic violence protection laws. Their article urges the Maryland Legislature to follow the lead of several states that have recognized the unmistakable correlation between domestic violence and animal abuse. Accordingly, the authors recommend amending the scope of Maryland's protective and peace order statutes to include protection for family pets and service animals.

Finally, our Recent Development pieces examine eleven of the most interesting cases decided by the Court of Appeals of Maryland in the last year. Written by *Law Forum's* staff editors, these selections cover a wide range of emerging issues in the state, including the scope of the Boulevard Rule as it relates to disfavored drivers' liability in traffic accidents, the gravamen of an informed consent claim in Maryland, and the proper standard for determining when the twelve-year statute of limitations for specialty actions is applicable.

The editorial board would like to acknowledge the entire staff of the *Law Forum* for their outstanding contributions to this issue. Additionally, we owe an enormous debt of gratitude to last year's editorial board for their guidance as we settled into our new positions. Finally, we thank you, our readers, for your continued input and support. We hope you enjoy our latest installment.

Best regards,

N. Tucker Meneely

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