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## Foreword

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## Foreword

The present Symposium Issue of the Northern Illinois University Law Review represents a milestone in the development of this journal. Even younger than the College of Law itself, the Law Review is presently concluding its eighth volume. This marks the first time that the Law Review has published a third issue in a volume, an increase which we anticipate will be maintained and eventually expanded still further in coming years.

The subject of this symposium and its distinguished roster of contributors have created considerable enthusiasm at the College of Law. The 1970 Illinois Constitution provided an unprecedented opportunity in Article XIV, Section 1(b) for Illinois voters to determine every twenty years whether a convention should be called to amend or revise the state constitution. The opportunity will be available for the first time in November, 1988. As Illinois provides no voter initiative method for specific amendment proposals, the automatic question provision of Section 1(b) has become vital to proponents of change who have been unable to persuade the legislature to bring constitutional amendments to the voters, such as those who seek to introduce "merit selection" of an appointed judiciary. The judicial article is one of many on which the contributing authors focus, in helping guide a judgment as to the desirability of convening a new constitutional convention.

There is much to be acknowledged in Stanley Mosk's article in this symposium pointing out the role that state constitutions have played and may play in the future in identifying, defining and extending individual rights against governmental action. Yet the bed-rock protections of the federal Bill of Rights, largely incorporated to protect against state action through the due process clause of the fourteenth amendment, and of the equal protection clause of the fourteenth amendment, have, in the opinion of this student of constitutional law, made state constitutional protections of individual rights for the most part incremental.

The major role of state constitutions is in establishing the processes of those governments which are closest to the people. Issues of home rule are analogous to issues of federalism, with the resolution of those issues usually even more important to the lives of individual citizens than the states rights issues with which federal courts have struggled. Issues of separation of powers are comparable at the state

and federal levels. Most important, the shaping of American democracy - the processes of representative government - is most significantly addressed in the charters which are state constitutions. This symposium is an attempt to raise the vital questions, and to suggest some possible answers.

The College of Law is grateful to the Illinois Bar Foundation for its support of this Symposium Issue. I would extend a particular measure of gratitude to Steve Brody, the Editor-in-Chief, and Bill Ellison, the Special Projects Editor, for their initiative, talent and perseverance in bringing this issue to print.

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