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FORUMS

SYMPOSIUM

Improving Maine’s Justice System:
A Significant Effort in Progress

Largely unnoticed by the general public, Maine’s legal community—
including judges, lawyers, litigants, court staff, and countless volun-
teers—has been hard at work to achieve greater efficiencies in the
courts’ operations, greater quality in the outcomes of the courts,
and improved access to justice for all of Maine’s citizens.

In this symposium, key leaders in the ongoing effort to improve Maine’s
justice system describe a number of recent significant reforms. Beginning
with an introduction by former Attorney General Andrew Ketterer,
the symposium includes commentary by Frank M. Coffin, Senior
United States Judge on the First Circuit Court of Appeals; Jon D. Levy,
Associate Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court; Nancy Mills,
Chief Justice of the Maine Superior Court; John David Kennedy,
Maine District Court Judge with Wendy F. Rau, Family Division
Director of the Maine District Court; and Calien Lewis, Executive
Director of the Maine Bar Foundation.

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ARTICLES

Term Limits, the Standing Committees,
and Institutional Response

Through citizen initiative in 1993, Maine passed a term limits
bill that prevents legislators with eight years of consecutive service
from seeking reelection. Many now question whether limits on
service have hampered legislative efficiency through the loss of
experienced leadership and institutional memory. In this article,
Moen and Palmer examine the impact of term limits on the
legislature’s standing committees.

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A Sampler of the New Historical
Atlas of Maine: Religion in Maine

This article offers an example of work-in-progress on a significant
project to develop an historical atlas of Maine. Religious participation
is a fundamental aspect of civic engagement in the United States.
We feature here a glimpse of Maine’s religious heritage.

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Gun Control:
State Versus Federal Regulation of Firearms

This article addresses the complex question of whether gun control
should be regulated by the federal or state government, or by some
combination of both. In a thorough look at the history of federal
and Maine state gun control—and at the various ways the issue of
gun violence can be framed—Harwood concludes that neither level
of government has a clear mandate to regulate exclusively.

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History + Resources = A Sense of Place

Unlike many states, Maine has an unusually strong “sense of place,” or
cultural regionalism. Griswold explores where this unusually strong sense
comes from, and how it can be further nourished through literature.

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