

**Legislation and Law Reform Committee
Mid-Winter Meeting 2000**

Miriam Grassby, Chair

The Legislation and Law Reform Committee reviews all of the federal submissions made by CBA and its National Sections, Committees and Conferences. We ensure quality, balance and consistency with CBA policy.

The National Sections are our biggest law reform “clients”, if you will. They provide the guts for most of the over 50 submissions made to the federal government each year. They take time from busy practices and more leisurely pursuits to give something back to the profession, and to improve Canadian law.

With the growing complexity of issues and the greater interest of CBA constituencies in law reform, we encourage special teams to examine issues that cross the boundaries of various subjects. A good example of this is Bill C-23, which proposes amendments to almost 70 federal laws, giving equal recognition to common law and same-sex partners — responding to a CBA resolution passed last August in Edmonton. Fourteen CBA Sections, one Conference and one Standing Committee have been asked to contribute to the submission.

I spoke earlier about the dedication of CBA members. I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of the Legislation and Law Reform staff at the National Office. Joan Bercovitch, Tamra Thomson, Gaylene Schellenberg, Richard Ellis, Pauline Guenette, Claudette Marleau and Michelle Brule work very hard — monitoring the federal government’s activities, keeping our members informed of these developments, liaising with government officials, analyzing trends, advising on strategies for reform and coordinating the preparation and approval of submissions. In short, they make us look good.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the members of the Legislation and Law Reform Committee: vice-chair Jeff Schnoor and Members Bob Kennedy, John Lowman, Virginia MacLean, and Julie Owen. My colleagues and I read a large number of sometimes lengthy submissions -- often in areas we know little or nothing about. Their efforts are very much appreciated.