



**Legislative Reference Bureau
Annual Report 2003**

Cover photo by Kathleen Sitter, LRB
Artistic design by Peter G. Herman, LRB



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August 2003

To the Members of the Joint Committee on Legislative Organization:

The Legislative Reference Bureau's essential quality is its orientation to the Wisconsin Legislature and legislative activities. As illustrated in this report, the great bulk of our workload is drafting legislation, providing legal advice, researching public policy, writing memos, preparing publications, and providing library services that address the wide range of issues facing the legislature, its committees, and members. These documents and related services contribute to the thorough study of issues by legislative committees and to informed debates on the floors of the senate and assembly. Ultimately, our products and services help the legislature to make Wisconsin a better place to live.

Our goal is to meet every legislator's need for information and drafts of legislation. We try to anticipate these needs so that we can answer questions more quickly and completely. We continually look for ways to improve our services, both in content and in manner of delivery. One exciting new initiative described in this report is our adoption of the "Really Simple Syndication" standard (RSS) for distribution of new information.

Our mission to deliver legislative drafting services and information about issues to the legislature requires that we integrate our efforts into the legislative workflow. With 102 years of experience, the LRB does this well. The legislature determines the public policies for the state. The LRB supports that process, and that support takes many forms. As each new policy issue emerges, the LRB begins to accumulate relevant library materials, develop annotated bibliographies, research the related policy areas, answer questions at the reference desk, respond to information requests, and draft proposed legislation at the request of members. In some cases, the LRB offers a seminar on a "hot topic," which normally serves as a general orientation to a policy issue.

During the past fiscal biennium, the LRB has worked hard to maintain its high level of service, both in terms of quality and quantity of services, while facing significant budget reductions. I believe we have managed to do this through a series of cost savings, careful planning, and simple hard work.

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During the past year, the LRB's general counsel has taken the lead in defending the director of the Legislative Technology Services Bureau (LTSB) in litigation related to a subpoena for confidential legislative records. This litigation reaches fundamental constitutional and legal issues of the separation of powers and the legislature's independence from the executive branch. The issues involved are strictly nonpartisan, and given the importance of the issues, the LRB is pleased to support the LTSB and the institutional prerogatives of the legislature in this litigation.

Also notable in the past year is the enormous amount of work done by the LRB to prepare for its move across the capitol square. In October 2003, we will move to One East Main Street. This move, which is the culmination of five years of planning, holds major strategic importance for the LRB because the new layout matches the LRB's workflow and situates the entire bureau on one floor, rather than having it spread out over four floors as in our current space. This building also houses our sister agencies, the Legislative Fiscal Bureau and the Legislative Council. Although most of the new office space will reuse the fixtures and finishes left behind by the State Law Library when it vacated the space, the public counters at the entry to the bureau will be decorated in a classic style reminiscent of the public areas in the capitol.

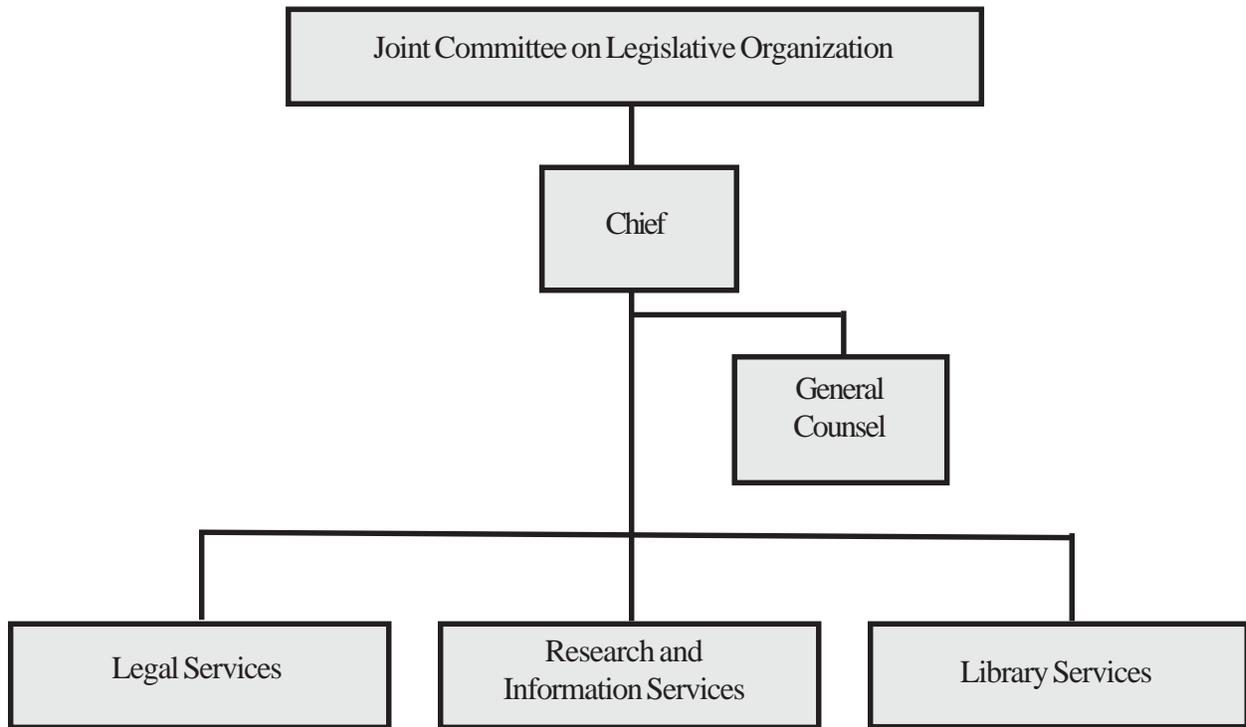
There are some disadvantages to the move. As a way to finance the renovation costs without affecting the state budget, the LRB temporarily forfeited a considerable amount of library space. A large part of the library collection will be placed in storage for the next few years. But overall, the new office location will poise the LRB to work better within the legislative community.

Sincerely,



Stephen R. Miller
Chief

Organization



Members of the Joint Committee on Legislative Organization

Representative John Gard, Cochairperson
Representative Steven Foti
Representative Jean Hundertmark
Representative James Kreuser
Representative Jon Richards

Senator Alan Lasee, Cochairperson
Senator Mary Panzer
Senator David Zien
Senator Jon Erpenbach
Senator Dave Hansen

Mission

The Legislative Reference Bureau's mission is to serve the Wisconsin Legislature and the public by providing nonpartisan legal, research, and library services. The bureau is committed to delivering, to the legislature and those designated by it, legal advice and legislative drafting in the most timely manner possible; offering, to the legislature and the public, accurate, timely, and useful information about state government and the issues before the legislature; and maintaining, for the legislature and the public, a comprehensive and well-organized collection of library materials and state government documents.

Extension

From long experience and study, the LRB possesses a body of specialized knowledge about legislative procedure and public policy that we share through publications, seminars, and internships. The LRB targets these activities to legislative staff, as practitioners, and to the general public. We do this because we believe in the legislative institution and representative democracy, and we see the value of developing the knowledge and skills of those who work for the legislature.

LRB Seminar Series

The LRB Seminar Series continued for a fourth year. The seminars provide training opportunities for legislators and staff in drafting, constituent assistance, and topical issues. This year's offerings included a review and forecast of the Wisconsin economy; training in the use of Internet services, researching bill histories, and bill drafting; and an examination of the budget process.

Wisconsin Legislative Institute Seminars

Last spring the LRB initiated the Wisconsin Legislative Institute, a continuing program of advanced-level seminars designed to provide pertinent legal information to legislators and senior staff. More than 60 people from the legislative community attended the all-day seminar in April. Presenters included such notables as Supreme Court Justice David Prosser and Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager. Topics ranged from an explanation of the governor's veto power to the impact of employment laws on legislative staff management. Future topics will include Indian tribal law and the impact of state legislation on the economy.

Legal Services Staff Section Fall Meeting

In October 2002, the LRB hosted the National Conference of State Legislatures' Legal Services Staff Section (LSSS) Fall Meeting. The meeting marked the first time that LSSS had a formal fall meeting and the first time that the scope of the conference extended beyond bill drafting.

National Library Week

On April 10, 2003, LRB library staff celebrated National Library Week with an open house in the capitol. The open house featured samples of publications produced by the bureau, a display of materials available from the Theobald Legislative Library, and a presentation featuring the bureau's library services.

Technology, Leadership, and a Vision for the Future

This year the LRB's Web site was featured in a video course entitled *Technology, Leadership, and a Vision for the Future*. Canter & Associates, Inc., a Sylvan Learning Company, designed the course to "foster professional growth in teachers." The video discusses how a bill becomes a law and in that discussion highlights the LRB's homepage.

Litigation

In the past year, the state supreme court took jurisdiction over a case that addresses whether prosecutors investigating campaign practices may subpoena the legislature's computer service agency for records of legislators and their staff. The LRB's general counsel has defended the Legislative Technology Services Bureau (LTSB) director in this litigation with the assistance of the LTSB staff attorney as co-counsel. At issue is a subpoena to the LTSB director requiring him to turn over legislators' records to the prosecution secretly. The supreme court will decide if the prosecution can obtain records in this way instead of issuing subpoenas to legislators directly. The motion to quash the subpoena stated five grounds: 1) section 13.96, stats., which directs LTSB to keep information that it maintains confidential, constitutes a privilege to refuse to turn over legislators' records; 2) the subpoena violates the separation of powers; 3) the subpoena violates the constitutional right of the legislature to determine exclusively its rules of proceedings; 4) the subpoena violates the constitution's speech and debate clause; and 5) the subpoena is overbroad and oppressive as it demands an electronic version of approximately 20 to 30 million pages of legislative records.

Interns

Tenzin Norbu, a member of the legislative staff that serves the exiled Tibetan government in Dharamsala, India, interned with the LRB from August 2002 until March 2003. The LRB provided Mr. Norbu training in legislative drafting and on rules of procedure so that he could, ultimately, return to Dharamsala and establish a professional legislative drafting agency to serve the Tibetan parliament. While at the LRB, Mr. Norbu continued his work on proposed legislation related to marriage and family law issues, which are areas of law within the Tibetan parliament's jurisdiction.

Nicole Jackelen, a graduate student at the UW-Milwaukee School of Information Studies, participated in a practicum at the LRB's Theobald Legislative Library for the 2002 fall semester. The study required 150 hours of library work, which included practical experience in cataloging and in the operation of a government library.

New location

During the past year, the LRB worked with the Department of Administration and the property owner at One East Main Street to find a way to move the LRB into a building without budgetary impact. An arrangement was approved by leadership, and construction commenced in the spring of 2003. In October, the LRB will move to One East Main Street. The new workspace has been designed to accommodate the bureau's functions and workflow. And for the first time since the bureau occupied space in the capitol, a single floor will house the entire agency. This layout will increase our ability to work together to serve the legislature. The new location will also have the added benefit of close proximity to our sister agencies—the Legislative Council and the Legislative Fiscal Bureau.

News feeds

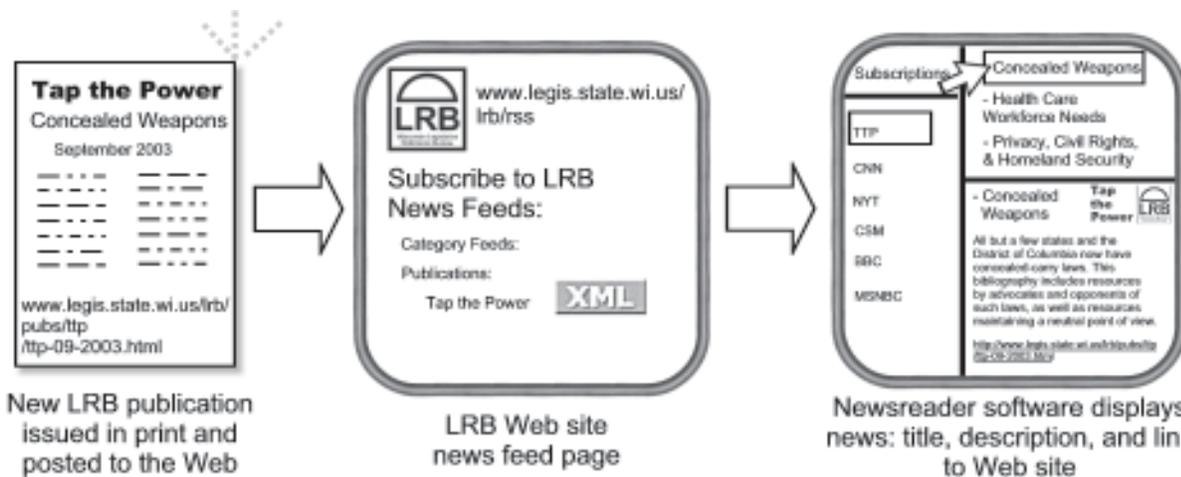
Information proliferates rapidly about public policy issues that affect Wisconsin. For legislators and members of the public, tracking current news about topics like chronic wasting disease, shared revenue, the state budget, Indian gaming compacts, or campaign finance reform can be a time-consuming task. Because the LRB writes a number of publications that distill legislative information, the bureau has implemented a new feature to make getting the information easier.

In June 2003, the LRB incorporated syndicated news feeds into its Web site. This news service provides access to LRB publications that are encoded as Really Simple Syndication (RSS) files. RSS is an XML-based technology designed to winnow information posted on the World Wide Web into a tailored format that includes a title, URL link, and concise description of an article. With RSS, readers subscribe to specific news feeds, then skim titles and descriptions of articles, and choose either to discard the information or view entire documents via a URL link.

To employ RSS, a user must install a free newsreader—also known as a news aggregator—which is an application that monitors Web sites that contain RSS files; alerts users when new content is detected; and tracks read and unread content. Once a user adds an RSS site to his or her list of news feeds, the information appears daily within the template of the news reader. News readers and RSS-equipped sites do not require subscribers to join a list, create and remember a password, visit other Web sites, or handle e-mail messages.

The types of news feeds available are extensive and range from topics about the arts, business, or science to news sources like the BBC or *New York Times*, to Weblogs. (A Weblog, or blog for short, is a Web site containing personal information about a specific topic—or a range of topics—that is logged and updated regularly.) To find RSS-encoded material, RSS-referring sites like www.syndic8.com, www.feedster.com, and www.newsgator.com offer searchable indexes to the countless syndicated news feeds.

With LRB's news feeds, a legislator or member of the public can get current legislative information organized by category (e.g., the budget process or criminal justice) or by publication title (e.g., *Tap the Power* or *Constitutional Highlights*). Please visit www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/rss for more information.



Graphic by Peter G. Herman, LRB

Production and finances

Statistics	<u>FY 2001-2002</u>	<u>FY 2002-2003</u>
Legal Section		
Bills, amendments, and resolutions drafted	4,727	4,538
Information and Research Section		
Research bulletins published	0	1
Informational bulletins published	2	2
Wisconsin briefs published	7	21
Legislative briefs published	2	4
Budget briefs published	16	3
Total information requests	20,287	24,282
Requests from legislators	3,069	3,920
Requests from the general public	17,218	20,362
Library Section		
Total LRBCAT (library catalog) titles	39,992	43,104
Titles added during the fiscal year	4,598	3,112
Total barcoded items in library collection	49,300	54,638
Barcoded items added during fiscal year	7,812	5,338
Publications acquired—reference and circulation	1,869	2,253
Publications received—Wisconsin documents	2,164	2,165
Number received through depository	1,259	1,428
Number received separately	905	737
Updates to loose-leaf information manuals	2,071	2,173
Issues received and processed	510	590
Clippings processed and classified	11,217	10,080
Indexes to the <i>Bulletin of the Proceedings</i> published	7	3

Statement of expenditures

Salaries	\$2,616,101
Benefits	876,394
Travel and training	11,699
Telecommunications	10,970
Insurance	2,793
Postage and employment advertising	879
New building expenses	626,878
Supplies and services, equipment, software, miscellaneous	<u>6,366</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$4,152,080</u>
PROPERTY VALUE INVENTORY TOTAL	\$943,632

This statement does not include acquisition of materials and information for legislative service agency libraries or production of legislative documents.

This statement is unaudited.

*Source:
Department of
Administration*

Staff

Stephen Miller, Chief
Peter Dykman, General Counsel

Library Services

Marian Rogers, Managing Librarian
Rose Arnold, Senior Librarian
Patricia Helgerson, Librarian
Allan Marty, Library Services Assistant
Arden Rice, Librarian

Research and Information Services

Larry Barish, Research Manager
Shanin Brown, Legislative Analyst
A. Peter Cannon, Senior Legislative Analyst
Victoria Enright, Publications Editor
Michael Keane, Legislative Analyst
Lynn Lemanski, Senior Publications Editor
Robert Paolino, Legislative Analyst
Clark Radatz, Legislative Analyst
Daniel Ritsche, Advanced Legislative Analyst
Richard Roe, Legislative Analyst
Kathleen Sitter, Publications Editor
Eileen Snyder, Publications Editor

Administrative Services

Cathlene Hanaman, Attorney and Manager
Mike Barman, Senior Program Assistant
Sarah Basford, Program Assistant
Joy Dyer, Senior Legislative Editor
Lynn Emery, Program Assistant
Kathy Follett, Legislative Editor
Jean Frantzen, Legislative Processing Specialist
Karen Gilfoy, Senior Legislative Editor
Patty Greenslet, Legislative Processing Specialist
Christian Haskett, Legislative Processing Specialist
Caroline Haugen, LPS Supervisor
Peter Herman, Information Technology Analyst
Shelly Herritz, Human Resources Specialist
Wendy Jackson, Legislative Editor
Karen Marty, Clerical Assistant
Annie Mentkowski, Program Assistant
Ron Schlueter, Legislative Processing Specialist
Chris Siciliano, Legislative Editor

Legal Services

General Government, Business, and Finance

Jeffery Kuesel, Managing Attorney
Richard Champagne, Senior Attorney
Pamela Kahler, Senior Attorney
Gordon Malaise, Senior Attorney
Robert Marchant, Attorney

Education, Local Government, and Taxation

Peter Grant, Managing Attorney
Joseph Kreye, Attorney
Mark Kunkel, Senior Attorney
Madelon Lief, Senior Attorney
Marc Shovers, Senior Attorney

Human Services and Courts

Debra Kennedy, Managing Attorney
Michael Dsida, Attorney
Robert Nelson, Senior Attorney
Robin Ryan, Attorney

Transportation and Resources

Rebecca Tradewell, Managing Attorney
Timothy Fast, Senior Attorney
Aaron Gary, Attorney
Mary Gibson-Glass, Senior Attorney
Peggy Hurley, Attorney
Robin Kite, Attorney

Staff shown as of June 30, 2003. During the fiscal year, Susan Kirby-Watkins, Laura Kunkel, and Patricia Meloy left the bureau.

