



Election Law

Theme Introduction

By Jason Hanselman

As we begin this gubernatorial election year, the SBM Publications and Website Advisory Committee thought it appropriate to develop a *Michigan Bar Journal* theme issue focusing on election-related articles. This edition features four articles, each of which covers vastly different topics under the broad subject of elections.

We are honored to have Michigan's director of elections, Chris Thomas, write an article explaining why he believes it is necessary for Michigan to enable citizens to register to vote online. This subject has recently been at the forefront of election reform movements, with Illinois becoming the 18th state to permit electronic or online registration.

Election law specialists Gary Gordon and Jim Holcomb have written a timely article exploring the history of voter-initiated constitutional amendments and the future of such amendment attempts following a 2012 Michigan Supreme Court decision in a case featuring challenges to numerous proposed constitutional amendments. Their excellent insight highlights how the Court's decision will guide practitioners in future attempts to amend Michigan's Constitution.

Matt Davis focuses on the balance of constitutional rights and government interest implicated by state and federal campaign

finance laws. And finally, I have written a piece exploring the history of the constitutional right for citizens to recall public officials and identifying how some of the changes recently implemented by Michigan's legislature will modify that process in future recalls.

Certainly, we all will be bombarded with political advertisements in the coming months. And it is easy for voters to become so frustrated by the often negative offerings that they disengage from the process—forgetting how fortunate we are to have the right to elect our local, state, and national leaders. I encourage State Bar of Michigan members to remain active in the election process, but to remember that what happens in the legislature and the courtroom often plays a significant role in the outcome of Michigan's elections. ■



Jason Hanselman is a partner in Dykema's Regulated Industries Department. He serves on the SBM Publications and Website Advisory Committee, which oversees publication of the Michigan Bar Journal.