CHAPTER IV

An Informational Clearing House

Activities of the Interstate Reference Bureau

NEED FOR LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH

The American Legislators' Association and the Council of State Governments have established the Interstate Reference Bureau, to assist any legislator, any legislative committee, or any legislative reference bureau to secure any desired information. There is no charge for this service and no obligation is incurred by using it.

Much valuable material concerning legislative subjects has already been collected, and the Bureau has facilities for assembling additional information as requested.

An Interstate Clearing House.

It has been said that in many parts of the United States we are suffering not from an emergency but from two emergencies—one economic and one governmental.

Expert revision of the administration and finances of many municipal, county, and state governments must be promptly effected. Of course it is obvious that in such revisions of our state governments, the legislatures must take a leading part. Not so obvious, but equally important to appreciate, is the fact that the legislatures also have important responsibilities in connection with the revision of the governments of our counties, of our towns and cities, and of our minor governmental districts as well. Local government cannot be satisfactory in any state in which the statutes concerning local government are defective.

Coordination between governments: Thus there is a tremendously significant field of inquiry:

First, concerning the extent to which government, viewed as a unit, should enter such fields as these: unemployment insurance, health, hospitals, sanitation, conservation, development of resources, highways, charities, correctional work, higher education, libraries, parks, public utilities, stabilization of markets, old-age insurance, mothers' pensions, child welfare, and other types of public welfare work.

Second, concerning the distribution of these functions between federal, state, and local governments, and the avoidance of overlapping and duplication.

Third, concerning the joint financing of projects by various governmental units.

These questions involve study and planning. And the federal government must study and plan with the state governments. The legislatures should, if possible, take counsel together—and Congress must do its part by endeavoring to cooperate with them. We should strive to utilize all of the nation's experience and all of the knowledge and judgment of our experts in the field of government.

A legislature can not enact thoroughly scientific or satisfactory measures unless it has available accurate information concerning both the problems to be met and the best technique for meeting them. It must know what the experiences of other communities have demonstrated and what procedures the leading experts have formulated. Such information is usually available only when a legislature has the benefit of a competent legislature reference service; and even the most competent services maintained by individual states can never perform their tasks adequately until the clearing house function now undertaken by the Interstate Reference Bureau, an integral unit of the American Legislators' Association and the Council of State Governments, is properly financed.

Even in states which have no legislative reference services of their own the legislatures are receiving without charge the benefit of the facilities of the Interstate
Reference Bureau. This bureau is thus beginning to make available to each of the 7,500 state legislators the researches not only of all the state legislative reference bureaus, but also:

1. Of hundreds of other public agencies, including many departments of the federal and state governments.
2. Of the law schools and political science departments of many universities.
3. Of numerous associations such as the American Public Health Association, the National Education Association, the American Bar Association, and the American Prison Reform Association.
4. Of many bureaus of municipal research.
5. Of countless other independent research agencies such as the Institute of Public Administration, the Brookings Institution, and the Russell Sage Foundation.

Responsibility for a Clearing House

The country abounds in resources of governmental research, which, heretofore, have been relatively inaccessible. Our present economic and governmental conditions have emphasized the imperative need for resources which will be readily available to every legislature. Consequently the establishment and development of this Interstate Reference Bureau seems to be essential. Fundamentally, this is a governmental responsibility. It is neither safe nor proper that it be entirely abandoned to the precarious support of private individuals or of foundations. On the other hand, it is neither reasonable nor feasible that any one or two states bear the entire expense of establishing an agency which functions for the equal benefit of all. It is apparent that the federal and state governments have a responsibility in connection with the development of this instrumentality. There are many precedents for the recognition of such a responsibility.

Development of Legislative Reference Services

To give content to the preceding general remarks, it is advisable to discuss the legislative reference movement. An accurate account of the important function of the Interstate Reference Bureau can be given only after the state legislative reference service has been generally described. There follows a brief summary of the activities of the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library together with a general statement on the development of the legislative reference bureaus in other states. The Wisconsin legislative reference service is typical of a well-organized agency of this character.

Wisconsin Beginnings

Tradition has it that early in the session of 1901, a farmer member of the Wisconsin Legislature, in search of information upon a pending proposal for legislation, wandered over to the law library at the university, a mile from the state capitol. There he looked at book after book, but he could not find the information he sought. Charles McCarthy, then a graduate student at the university, observed his quandary, offered to help him and found what this member wanted.

That was the beginning of the present type of legislative reference service, although as early as 1890 the New York State Library had created a subordinate position of legislative librarian, which was occupied by a man who devoted his time to indexing the legislation of other states; and although for many years the British Parliament had maintained parliamentary draftsmen. Neither of these prior services, however, had attracted any attention in this country, and neither of them had embraced much of what is now known as legislative reference service.

During the 34 years which have since intervened, the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library has had a continuous existence, and to-day it functions much as it did during the 20 years that the late Doctor McCarthy was its chief. The fact that it renders an appreciated service is evidenced by the fact that not a single vote has ever been cast in the legislature against an appropriation for it.

Staff

The permanent staff of the legislative reference library consists of 11 persons—the chief, 5 librarians and research assistants, 4 stenographers and clerks; and a part-time messenger. In addition, at the
opening of each session five attorneys are employed as bill draftsmen, but only two of them are retained during the entire session.

Of course the staff is also supplemented by as many stenographers and clerks as are needed to type, proof read, and index bills during the sessions. These clerks include many girls who are regularly employed in other state departments, but who do extra evening work in the bill-drafting department. The entire staff—except the chief and the librarians, who must be library-school graduates—is selected and employed under the provisions of the state civil service law. The continuity in the personnel of the staff is noticeable. The library has had only three chiefs in 34 years, and several of the present employees have been with the department for periods ranging from 20 to 25 years. The bill draftsmen are local attorneys who come back session after session. Usually there is not more than one man on the staff who has not had previous drafting experience.

Cost of the Service

The present appropriation to the legislative reference library of Wisconsin is $25,000 for each biennium. This is a continuing appropriation, but the unexpended balance lapses annually.

The extent to which the legislators utilize the expert services of such a staff may be judged by the figures for a typical biennium: In 1932, a nonsession year, the legislative reference library of Wisconsin answered 2,637 requests for information, many of which required a substantial amount of original research; and in 1933, a session year, it answered 2,019 such requests to May 1st. In the latter year, 27 of the 33 senators and 78 of the 100 members of the lower house made use of this information service. During the same year this service was also utilized by various members of Congress, and by nearly all of the departments of the Wisconsin state government, by many local officials, by numerous organizations, and by more than 500 private citizens of the state.

At the 1933 session, the bill-drafting services of the library were used by every member of the house of representatives and by every member of the senate. During that session the library received a total of 4,343 drafting requests, a number almost equaling the total number of bills, resolutions, and amendments introduced in both houses.

The library's collection of 75,000 catalogued pieces of material, chiefly unpublished studies, articles from magazines, and documents, is constantly consulted by the staff in the performance of its drafting and research services.

In Other States

It soon became apparent that the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library was rendering noteworthy services, and as a result bureaus of similar character were established in other states.

Along with Wisconsin, New York was developing a legislative reference service as a section of its State Library. This has since become the most extensive research agency of any of the state services and one of the best in all other respects.

In 1907 statutes were passed creating such bureaus or departments in the following states: Indiana, Michigan, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. In 1909 similar enactments were made in Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Texas. Later similar services were established either with or without specific legislation in various other states, including Arizona, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Montana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Vermont.

The most recent reference service is that established in Kansas by an act passed in 1930.

Many of the bureaus have developed into effective organizations; although some of them have only one or two staff members. Among those which have the desirable combination of high standards of workmanship and staffs of fairly adequate size are California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Each of five states—California, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin—has eight or more people engaged in legislative reference work on a full time basis.

Experience has clearly demonstrated that each of these bureaus is of great value to the state which maintains it.
There should be a law against the unbridled use of the imagination. In the meantime, however; the present administration of the American Legislators' Association is indulging in this day-dream:

That in every state of the Union there is to be an efficient legislative reference bureau, well able to furnish legislators with desired information in convenient form, to prepare well-drafted bills, and to condense—as well as to revise—the existing statutes.

And that once a year, the forty-eight experts who direct these bureaus are to spend three or four days taking counsel together.

**Congressional Legislative Reference Service**

In the meantime, Congress began to realize the value of legislative reference service. This realization was due partly to the demonstration of Wisconsin and of the other states which had established such facilities, and partly to the increasing acuteness of the Congressional need for such services.

*Library of Congress:* Beginning in 1911, the House and the Senate Committee on the Library held extensive hearings concerning a proposal to establish a legislative research bureau in the Library of Congress. Among the persons who testified in support of the proposal at these hearings were Herbert Putnam, Librarian of Congress, Lord Bryce, then ambassador from Great Britain, and Doctor McCarthy. Among other prominent advocates of the proposal, then before this committee were the directors of several state legislative reference bureaus, President Lowell of Harvard University, President Van Hise of the University of Wisconsin, the senior Senator La Follette, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson. After much consideration, the bill was passed in 1913, and the legislative reference division of the Library of Congress was organized under the direction of Dr. Herman H. B. Meyer who has served as its chief since 1914. This bureau specializes in researches concerning federal problems, though the State Law Index under the direction of Miss Margaret Stewart, is of great value to state legislative reference bureaus.

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**Coordinating Legislative Research Agencies**

Many readers who are acquainted with the valuable functions of the Legislative Reference Section of the Library of Congress will naturally question the possibility of the Interstate Reference Bureau duplicating these functions. The answer is that neither agency duplicates the services undertaken by the other. On the contrary, they cooperate most cordially and each has a real need for the facilities of the other. The Legislative Reference Section of the Library of Congress provides the same service for Congress which the Interstate Reference Bureau provides for state legislatures, administrative officials, and legislative reference bureaus. It is unfortunate that the Interstate Reference Bureau, because of inadequate financing, cannot make its activities more readily available to the legislative, executive and administrative branches of the federal government.

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**The Interstate Reference Bureau**

*What Is the Bureau?*

The Interstate Reference Bureau is a quasi-governmental agency, bearing the official endorsement of forty-six state legislatures. In essence, it is a logical development of the legislative reference bureaus. In these various state bureaus, 350 staff members—132 full-time and the rest part-time workers—are now engaged in legislative research, in bill-drafting, and in the revision of statutes. Until the establishment of the Interstate Reference Bureau in October, 1930, these numerous state bureaus had no regular channels of communication with each other. Consequently its advent was hailed with sincere enthusiasm by all of the state bureaus, and with constantly increasing effectiveness it is serving as the clearing house of these bureaus, giving each state access to the work of a combined corps of legislative technicians which no individual state could possibly afford to maintain.

The Bureau, organized as a part of the American Legislators' Association and the
Council of State Governments has access to the unique and valuable research facilities of those organizations. Dr. Rodney L. Mott, director of the School of Social Sciences at Colgate University and former research consultant of the Association describes its work in the American Political Science Review for April, 1932. The following is a revised excerpt from the article:

**Research Work**

"The research work of the American Legislators' Association falls into two divisions: (1) a survey of the sources of legislative information; (2) a study of the legislative process.

"The Legislators' Association is an organization of lawmakers. It has been fostered by a growing feeling that effective laws are not the inevitable result of campaign oratory, backslapping, or vote-trading. Many legislators desire to take advantage of the experience of other states, but find it difficult to learn much about that experience. Others would like to consult research workers who have been studying the problems which perplex them, but lack facilities for discovering these experts. For these legislators in their quest for assistance, the American Legislators' Association corresponds to a radio antenna. Its first task, therefore, is to discover who is preparing material for the legislative market.

**Founts of Knowledge**

"Legislation touches an extremely large number of problems. For this reason, a considerable proportion of the research work in the social sciences has legislative implications. Questions are constantly arising on which expert advice can be given by research workers in the fields of sociology, education, or law, as well as those of political science and economics. Many of these experts are connected with universities, but it also frequently happens that doctors, lawyers, and social workers develop legislative hobbies and do very reliable work on them.

"The typically American way of securing information, however, is through an organization, a committee, a bureau, or an institute. Some of these organizations are frankly propagandist; others have no ulterior motives. Some have large staffs and adequate facilities; others are mere paper organizations centering around single individuals. Some are privately supported, others are public or quasi-public in character. Some are actively interested in legislation; for others legislative work is incidental.

"A list of the names and addresses of these organizations is only a beginning. It is also necessary to know the subjects that each organization is working on, and especially the specific aspect of the subject it is interested in. It is even more important to know which individuals in each organization are interested in these subjects, how adequate their facilities for work are, and how biased their conclusions are likely to be. It is quite as important that this information be kept up to date by continual revision as that it be exhaustive.

**Providing Valuable Information**

"The time honored method of trial and error has proved temporarily useful in this work. Requests for information are continually pouring into the Interstate Reference Bureau, which is conducted by the Association. In many cases, the inquirer is placed in direct contact with a valuable source of information. But if the subject is a new one, it becomes necessary to survey the field. A few minutes spent with the published list of research projects will usually indicate to whom we may turn, even if our own memories do not call any name to mind. If all these sources fail us, the task is more complicated, but by no means hopeless. By a series of inquiries to persons in closely related fields, it is usually possible to find someone who can name the individual or organization most interested in the given question.

"Sometimes it is desirable to make a systematic survey of one class of organization. The legislative reference bureaus are among the most active and at the same time most valuable sources of information on legislation. They frequently are called upon to investigate legislative subjects, and their work is invariably impartial, usually thorough, and often exhaustive.

**Law-making Machinery**

"The second part of the research work of the American Legislators' Association
Involves the law-making process itself. In this branch of its activity, the Association is interested in legislatures rather than legislation—the legislative process rather than the substance of legislation. The composition, organization, and procedure of the state legislatures are significant in this connection, as are the methods and work of those agencies which assist in the process, e.g., revisors of statutes, interim committees and commissions, bill-drafting agencies, and legislative reference departments. The research activities on these topics range all the way from compiling a simple table showing the 22 special sessions held last year, to an elaborate study of the length of legislative sessions. Indeed, the entire process of law-making, from the election of the legislator to the final passage of his bills, lies within the range of this research.

"At the present time, the Legislators' Association is completing a study of legislative personnel. This project was much more elaborate than any which has been undertaken previously, and it is believed that the results are much more significant. The questions it attempted to answer are: What kind of individual is elected to the state legislature in each state? To what extent are our laws being made by novices? The age, the occupation, the party affiliation, and previous legislative experience of every individual who is now a member of a state legislature are being secured. These characteristics were selected because information on them could be secured with reasonable facility and the data thus compiled would be of considerable importance.

The Men Who Make the Laws

"The names of all the 7,500 members of state legislatures had already been compiled for the mailing list of the Association—a compilation, incidentally, which is unique in itself. Data on the age, occupation, party affiliation, and previous legislative experience of some 4,500 legislators were available in state bluebooks or legislative manuals. But many states have no such documents, and in others the information given in the manual is incomplete. It was necessary, therefore, to supplement the data by tapping other sources.

"Requests for information were sent to state officials and to local newspapers; and although some results were obtained from these sources, there were still gaps in the information. As a last resort, a series of questionnaires was sent to the legislators themselves, and during a period of four months complete information has been secured on 2,200 additional lawmakers. The Association is now able to indicate some of the type characteristics of the homo legis-latus."

If the initial material is indicative of what may be expected when all the information is in, the conclusions from this material are certain to be interesting, and perhaps even startling. The great importance of this investigation, however, will be in its cumulative effect. It is planned to carry it on from biennium to biennium: In a few years, we will be able to show the changing characteristics of our legislators."

Whom Does the Bureau Serve?

The Bureau is organized primarily for the service of the following groups:
1. The legislative reference bureaus of the states.
2. Individual state legislators.
3. Governors and other state officials interested in the formulation of effective legislation.

The Bureau stands ready to supply information and to render other services to all members of Congress and to all Congressional agencies.

In this connection it is interesting to note that during recent months, the Bureau has not only supplied information upon the request of various members of Congress and other Congressional agencies but also to a long list of divisions of the Federal Departments of the Treasury, the Interior, Agriculture and Commerce, and the emergency agencies.

What Staff Has the Bureau?

During the past three years the Bureau's staff has consisted of at least twelve full-time members. All of the members of the staff are college graduates; individual members have received degrees from Chicago, Cincinnati, Colorado, Columbia, Duke, Harvard, Iowa, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, North Carolina, Pomona, Princeton, Stanford, Syracuse, Vanderbilt, Williams, Wisconsin and other colleges and universities.
Members of this staff have served on the political science and economics faculties of the universities of Syracuse, Chicago, Stanford, Alabama, Kentucky, North Carolina, Harvard, Duke and American University. The Director of the staff, a former President of the Denver Bar Association, was for eight years a member of the State Senate of Colorado. The actual work of the Interstate Reference Bureau is in charge of Mr. Hubert R. Gallagher, formerly a member of the political science faculties of Syracuse and Stanford.

Inquirers
The Bureau supplies information in response to specific inquiries from legislative reference bureaus, legislative committees, individual legislators, and other governmental officials.

Several thousand requests for information have been received by the Interstate Reference Bureau. In 1934 requests came from all forty-eight states. Among the more active states in this connection were California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Montana, New York and Pennsylvania. Many letters came from legislative reference bureaus but in the states which have poorly staffed bureaus or no legislative reference service, the inquiries came directly from the legislators themselves.

The names of the inquirers who have asked for assistance could form the basis of a Who's Who in Legislation. A large number of the more progressive lawmakers, many chairmen or clerks of important standing or interim committees, directors of two-thirds of the legislative reference services, clerks of various legislative bodies, numerous state and federal officers, professors of political science and legislation in the leading universities, and directors of research agencies which are studying legislative problems, have all requested help from the Interstate Reference Bureau.

Types of Questions
These requests for information have come in by telegram, on post cards, in letters, over the telephone, and through personal calls. Their subjects have ranged over every conceivable problem of legislative concern. Collectively, they would tax the wisdom of the Delphic Oracle and the resources of the best equipped library. If any of our readers wish to prepare for an examination in legislative science, they might practice on these few simple problems—a sample of those which the Interstate Reference Bureau has been asked to solve during the past few months:

1. How can unemployment relief be financed?
2. How much are judges paid in other states?
3. How much revenue has the Mississippi sales tax produced?
4. In which states may the legislature be convened in special session without a call by the governor?
5. How can lobbying be controlled?
6. Which states require the publication of banns before marriage?
7. Can a bill be amended on third reading without requiring its recengrossment?
8. What are the provisions of the various laws regulating hours of labor in mercantile establishments?
9. What is the best form of blue-sky law?
10. What provisions should be incorporated in a bill calling a convention to consider the repeal of prohibition?
11. Are compulsory automobile insurance laws feasible?
12. How much will a constitutional convention cost?
13. What are the provisions of the New York act regulating the practice of pharmacy?
14. How does Canada regulate the liquor traffic?
15. Which states have free textbook laws?

The press is turning to the Interstate Reference Bureau with increasing frequency. During the past year the Bureau has answered inquiries from many periodicals such as the New York Times, the Chicago Daily News and the Christian Science Monitor and from the chief editorial writer for the Hearst papers. Inquiries have also been answered for both the Associated and the United Press. On one occasion the news magazine, Time, held its presses while the Interstate Reference Bureau secured some information for it.

The members of the staff of the Inter-
state Reference Bureau are thoroughly trained research workers in legislative problems, but they do not claim to be supermen. They have been as much-puzzled by some of the questions which have been addressed to the bureau as were the legislators who sent them. Many problems could only be solved by pooling the knowledge and wisdom of specialists in all parts of the United States. Other questions required the combined information and resources of all the legislative-reference bureaus to answer them. The continuous contact which the Interstate Reference Bureau has maintained with the scores of agencies studying legislative problems has made it possible to unlock, and make quickly available, tremendous resources of information and advice.

In many cases the information desired could be furnished directly from the offices of the Interstate Reference Bureau. A request for the number of legislatures holding regular sessions in 1933, a letter asking which states had enacted minimum wage laws for women and children, or a telegram asking which states permit the consolidation of counties, each presented problems which could be answered from the Bureau’s files. More frequently, however, it was found desirable to refer the question to some authority or agency which had recently studied it. In this way the inquirer is placed in direct contact with the source of information and can follow up the answer he receives with further questions.

Each inquiry presents its own special problem. Some demand specific information—“Which states levy taxes on the distribution of natural gas?”—others are extremely general—“What information have you on current legislation?” Some require an answer immediately. Information has been furnished for a committee hearing held the same day that the telegram requesting it was received. Other questions can be adequately answered only through the cooperation of legislative reference services in several states. In a few cases it was necessary to request assistance from a score of agencies.

More inquiries were received concerning taxation than on any other subject. Indeed, a quarter of the requests for information have involved tax problems.

**Bulletin Service**

It became clear that the Bureau could tremendously improve its service if it would provide bulletins containing the basic information on the questions which were repeatedly asked. In many cases a simple, but accurate and impartial, statement of the facts concerning the problem would answer the question. Accordingly in September, 1932, the Bureau began the issuance of a series of mimeographed bulletins. By the end of the following May, *50* of these informational bulletins had been issued. They have been a most useful supplement to the inquiry service of the Interstate Reference Bureau and have covered a large number of subjects of legislative concern. In all, 105 different bulletins were distributed by the Bureau by the end of 1934, many of which were compiled by the Bureau itself. Doubtless the issuance of these bulletins forestalled a large number of inquiries which would otherwise have been received.

A few examples of the topics upon which the Bureau has recently compiled bulletins are: sales tax laws, sales tax revenues, liquor control laws, housing laws, and state recovery acts.

It was found that suitable material on many problems had already been prepared by some other agency. All that was necessary in those cases was to make that material available to legislators and to the legislative reference bureaus. In some instances it was necessary to prepare the data for a bulletin in the offices of the Bureau, either because no other material was available, or because the bulletins issued by other organizations were not entirely impartial. At other times the material compiled in answer to inquiries seemed so significant that the Bureau mimeographed it as a separate bulletin.

In a few cases bulletins have been specially prepared to meet emergency problems. The rapid spread of bank failures, the wholesale threat of mortgage foreclosures, the prevailing tax delinquency, and the repeal of the Volstead Act led directly to the preparation of bulletins on bank moratorium laws, farm mortgage legislation, state scrip, and the control of liquors.

For more than two years the Bureau has
also distributed a weekly bibliographical bulletin. One hundred and twenty bulletins were issued by January 1935. This service lists the publications received by the American Legislators' Association and 18 other organizations in the field of government which are cooperating with it in Chicago. Although distributed primarily to the legislative reference services, copies of the bibliographical bulletin have also been sent to a selected list of legislators.

These various bulletins have been under the immediate direction of Dr. George C. S. Benson, director of the Publications Division, and Mr. Hubert R. Gallagher, director of the Research Division. Mrs. Lucile L. Keck, of the Joint Reference Library, has charge of the indexing for the bibliographical bulletins. This paragraph would not be complete without mention of the efficient assistance which Miss Evelyn Sparling and Miss Martha Shippert have rendered in various phases of the work of the Interstate Reference Bureau.

Other Services

Magazine service: The Interstate Reference Bureau of the American Legislators' Association also superintends the publication of a monthly magazine, "State Government" which is described fully in Chapter III.

Study of law-making machinery: A systematic study of means for improving the organization and procedure of the state legislatures.

Personnel Survey: A systematic and exceedingly illuminating study of the personnel of the 96 legislative houses is under way. This project is discussed earlier in the chapter.

Financing the Bureau

This Bureau has been called into existence on account of the lack of coördination and cooperation between our 48 state governments. There is an obvious defect in our governmental machinery which makes cooperative governmental enterprises exceedingly difficult to maintain. The Association is dedicated in part to an effort to reduce this defect. If this Bureau is worth its salt, it should be financed by the 48 states jointly and the Association is hopeful of securing a small regular appropriation from each of the states. It would also be appropriate for the federal government to join with the states in financing this undertaking, since it is no less important for us to have coordination and cooperation between the 48 states, than it is to have a well-gear ed relationship between the federal government and the various states. This project is a contribution to that cause.

A Reference Manual

The Interstate Reference Bureau has recently completed the preparation of a manual, or handbook, of the activities of the state legislative reference services.

Concise statements of the activities of each reference bureau comprise the first section of this volume. There are short paragraphs covering the history of each state bureau, the law establishing it, the finances for its maintenance, its director and staff, its office facilities, the bureau's own library and its relationship to other libraries, the work of the bureau, and the particular activities in which it specializes. The extent to which state bureaus engage in research, bill drafting, revision, and other activities such as editing the state "bluebook" or preparing public documents is also indicated.

One of the principal objects of the Interstate Reference Bureau is to promote closer cooperation between the state reference services. This manual should be a useful tool for the interchange of information among the bureaus, as well as a valuable reference volume for all students of legislative problems.

Annual Conference

A Legislative Conference is held, annually if that is possible, by the American Legislators' Association to which all directors of legislative reference bureaus, state librarians and interested legislators are invited. These conferences are often held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Association and have afforded opportunities for a valuable interchange of information and opinions among those participating. For instance, the 1932 conference resulted in:

1. The establishment of more direct and cordial relationships between these various bureaus working in the same field.
2. Improved organization in some of the
bureaus—as a result of both formal and informal discussions of techniques.

3. A general agreement that a clearing-house for the various legislative reference bureaus is essential; and that it should expedite its undertaking to organize a continuing survey of the significant researches which each state bureau is making or has recently made.

4. An agreement that the Interstate Reference Bureau should secure a copy of the classification which each active legislative reference service now uses in filing and organizing its legislative material; that the Bureau should make a comparison of these various classifications, thus ascertaining in what respects these classifications are similar and in what respects they are different; and that this should constitute the first step in the preparation of an approved standard classification of legislative topics for bureau use. Eventually this standard classification will be recommended to each new legislative reference bureau as it is established; it may also be utilized by each existing bureau, as far as is feasible.

Executives Express Approval

Many executives of state legislative reference services have indicated their readiness to cooperate in the development of the Interstate Reference Bureau project. Among them are:

DEWITT BILLMAN, Secretary of the Illinois Legislative Reference Bureau.

HORACE E. FLACK, Executive of the Legislative Reference Service of Maryland.

GRACE M. SHERWOOD, Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau of Rhode Island.

CHARLES KETTLEBOROUGH, Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau of Indiana.

ARTHUR A. SCHWARTZ, Head of the Ohio Legislative Reference Service.

MARGARET M. GIBBS, Legislative Reference Librarian for Georgia.

GEORGE S. GODARD, State Librarian of Connecticut.

LAWRENCE K. FOX, Superintendent of the South Dakota State Department of History.

HARRIET C. LONG, State Librarian of Oregon.

JOHN H. FERTIG, Director of the Pennsylvania Legislative Reference Bureau.

EDWARD H. REDSTONE, State Librarian of Massachusetts.

EDNA D. BULLOCK, Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau of Nebraska.

A. J. SMALL, Law and Legislative Librarian of Iowa.

HADDON IVINS, State Librarian of New Jersey.

ALLEN MOORE, former Director of the Legislative Reference Office of Colorado.

HELEN COFFIN, Legislative Reference Librarian of Connecticut.

W. T. CASH, State Librarian of Florida.

ALICE LYMAN, State Librarian of Wyoming.

HARRISON J. CONANT, State Librarian of Vermont.

HENRY M. LONDON, Legislative Librarian of North Carolina.

DORIS H. CONNERLY, Legislative Librarian of Texas.

FRANKLIN CORRICK, Revisor of Statutes of Kansas.

WILLIAM R. SHANDS, Director of Statutory Research and Drafting of Virginia.

WILLIAM E. HANNAN, Legislative Reference Librarian of New York.

FRED B. WOOD, Legislative Counsel of California.

HOWARD F. OLM, Head of the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library.

Others who have furnished information or counsel to the Interstate Reference Bureau are:

REBECCA FRIEDMAN, Librarian of the Legislative Reference Bureau of Maine.

VIRGINIA G. MOODY, State Librarian of South Carolina.

VERNER M. JONES, Director of the unofficial Tennessee Legislative Reference Service.

MULFORD WINSOR, State Librarian of Arizona.

ALICE V. WARNER, of the Legislative Reference Department of Michigan.

DALLAS T. HERNDON, Director, Arkansas Department of Archives and History of Arkansas.

ASHBURN K. BARBOUR, Law Librarian of Montana.

And of course an inestimable contribution to the development of this project has been made by the distinguished Director of the Legislative Reference Service of the
Library of Congress, Dr. Herman H. B. Meyer.

**Model Legislative Reference Bureau Law**

At the meeting of the legislative reference section of the American Legislators' Association in 1933, a model legislative reference law was discussed and, as a result, a model bill on the subject was drafted. The Interstate Reference Bureau has frequently received requests for such a bill. It is believed that the establishment of legislative reference bureaus may be substantially aided by the existence of this model statute.

**Hearing Before House Committee**

The following opinions on the Interstate Reference Bureau were expressed at a hearing before the Library Committee of the House of Representatives on March 24, 1932. The hearing concerned a bill for federal appropriations in support of the Interstate Reference Bureau.

"Possibly the man most intimately acquainted with just what members of Congress want was the former Legislative Counsel of the United States Senate, Frederic P. Lee." He said:

"There are two functions which the Interstate Reference Bureau may serve. It may act as the clearing house for the various state legislative reference bureaus, and it may make available to Congress this collected material concerning state government.

"It has been my experience that a great deal of congressional legislation lies in, in one way or another, with state legislation. I have been concerned in the drafting of very large amounts of various Federal legislative enactments, and while I was engaged in that work, we frequently found it necessary to find out what the states had done in this field or what would be the effect of the proposed federal legislation on various types of state legislation.

"Information needed: "To illustrate, take the motor-bus legislation which is now pending in Congress. On that legislation I served not only Mr. Couzens' committee in the Senate, but Mr. Parker's committee, the Interstate Commerce Committee, in the House. The measure passed the House once. For instance, one of the first problems that arises is the question whether the regulation shall extend to trucks as well as busses, and whether it shall cover contract carriers as well as common carriers; and the first thing one wants to know is, what have the states done in these various fields, and how successfully has it worked out? Do they require certificates of public convenience and necessity for these various types of carriers? What has been done in the way of requiring insurance policies or surety bonds to assure that persons injured by one of these carriers may have an adequate recovery, and to provide for the financial responsibility?" Variations in legislation: "The states have various types of legislation. Some have insurance policies; some have surety bonds; some provide for direct suit against the surety company or the insurance company; others require first that suit be brought against the carrier, and if it is impossible to recover there, then there is the additional remedy against the insurance company; and the various types and the various angles of the problem can be worked out in one way or another in the legislation of the states and in the administrative practices of a great many of the states. But to get that sort of information is not an easy thing, even through our legislative reference service in the Library of Congress.

"What Congress wants is immediate information. It is not possible to set some one to work, even in the Library of Congress, for a period of 3 or 4 or 5 months to dig out information that is needed tomorrow or within the next week or so. If the information is already accumulated, for instance, on these bus matters in the Library of Congress, one would naturally ask the Library for it, but if they do not have it, does it exist somewhere else? The Legislative Reference Bureau would serve to apprise Congress of whether or not that information existed at other sources; and they would be in a much better position to know that, than would the Library of Congress. Of course, while the Library of Congress does a great deal of work upon existing legislation, in digesting it and knowing the statutes, it does not keep up with the administrative regulations or the administrative activities in connection with various,
legislation and how it is working out in the states, and they can not, sitting in this central position, obtain that sort of information with any facility. That has been my experience. The cost of it would be too great for them. That sort of information has to be ascertained by some one who is in the field in the particular state and knows what is going on there.

"The point that I want to emphasize is that it seems to me that in connection with Federal legislation Congress will find that an organization that can apprise it of where the information exists with regard to state legislation and state administrative activity can perform a real Federal service as well as an interstate service."

Seabury C. Mastick, Chairman of the New York Commission for the Revision of the Tax Laws, voiced the need of the states and of special commissions before the House Committee on Libraries:

"For the past eight years I have been chairman of the joint committee of both houses on taxation and retrenchment. At present I am chairman of the state commission for the revision of the tax laws which has been conducting an extensive research into taxation for the past two years. During this period of eight years the state has spent under my direction, for research into the matters set forth, upwards of $200,000. I have, therefore, special knowledge of the value and result of research.

"Our various committees and commissions have been hampered in their work by lack of information as to what other states and the Federal Government as well, were doing in the various lines of study. There has been no clearing house of information and it has been necessary to conduct extensive correspondence through questionnaires and otherwise which would have been obviated had there been such a clearing house as the American Legislators' Association is beginning to afford. I urge a suitable appropriation for the work of the Association in order to advance the cooperation in legislation and the uniformity of law which will result from the activities of the Association."

Professor Joseph P. Chamberlain, Director of the Legislative Drafting Fund of Columbia University:

"The state legislator's secretariat gives the legislator who is interested in the subject a chance to get the wisdom and the data that have been gathered by the states through official sources, such as their legislative reference libraries, upon the various questions at issue. It takes no position on them, of course; it should not; but it can supply the legislators with the information that will enable them to test out the arguments presented by the various national groups and to present matters of legislation in a way which will make them very much more efficient. . . . I am immensely impressed, and more and more convinced that we are supplying fair and reasonable information to legislators and the legislative committees."

Edwin E. Witte, former Chief of the Legislative Reference Service of Wisconsin, now Executive Director of the President's Committee on Economic Security:

"With such endorsement of the Interstate Reference Bureau by Congress, its future would be assured, and I have no doubt that it would within a short time prove itself an indispensable agency to legislators, both state and Federal. This is a step which I sincerely hope Congress will see fit to take, and in expressing this hope, I believe I voice the sentiment of all the state legislative reference services."

John G. Winant, then Governor of New Hampshire:

"May I suggest that the bill before your committee in support of the Interstate Reference Bureau of the American Legislators' Association would, in my opinion, develop a useful and necessary service to state legislators and executives in formulating legislation?"

John H. Fertig, Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau of Pennsylvania:

"Pennsylvania is vitally interested in the establishment and adequate financing of this Bureau, and was the first state to extend financial aid to it. . . . I heartily endorse the bill now pending in Congress."

Justin Miller, then Dean of the Law School of Duke University:

"I am sending this letter to you to urge upon you the importance of the work which the Legislators' Association is doing and the desirability of adopting legislation which will give Federal recognition and assistance to this splendid work. It will be par-
particularly helpful in these times of stress if constructive leadership of this kind can secure the recognition which will come from the passage of this bill.

Harold W. Dodds, now President of Princeton University:

"I know of no proposal which will do more to reduce the mass of legislation of which the taxpayers are complaining, and to introduce clarity and understanding into our legislatures; than an interstate reference bureau properly supported. . . . The effectiveness of the state bureaus will be increased by the organization of a national clearing house. Such an organization will be a godsend to those states which do not have reference bureaus and probably will not have for many years to come."

Morris B. Lambie, Executive Secretary of the League of Minnesota Municipalities wired:

"Acting in my individual capacity, request your committee on Library to support favorably bill introduced by Congressman Luce and Senator Steiger for Federal participation in Interstate Reference Bureau of American Legislators' Association. Believe passage of bill will be of inestimable value and aid to all governmental reference and informational bureaus, libraries, universities, national and state legislators, and public administrators."

Charles E. Merriam, head of the Political Science Department of the University of Chicago:

"I have been very much interested in this project ever since the American Legislators' Association came to my attention. Beyond question, there should be a clearing house for the various legislative reference bureaus of the several states. This plan goes much further, and is capable of rendering an extremely important service if given the support it deserves on its merits.

"In my judgment, the organization is developing along sound lines under thoroughly responsible administration. I hope it may be possible to obtain federal cooperation in the development of a service which has so important a bearing on the whole growth of our legal structure."

Report of Library Committee

"The Committee on the Library, whose members were Honorable Ralph Gilbert of Kentucky, Chairman; Honorable Kent E. Keller of Illinois; Honorable Lindsay C. Warren of North Carolina; Honorable Robert Luce of Massachusetts; and Honorable Ruth Pratt of New York, reports the resolution to the House of Representatives with a recommendation that it be passed.

"This brief report of the committee concerns the interrelation between the work of Congress and that of the state legislatures.

"The Interstate Reference Bureau has been organized in order to make immediately accessible to every state legislator the best information and counsel on any matter of state legislation.

"This committee has reached the conclusion that the Interstate Reference Bureau's services and material have great potential value for Congress. Mr. Frederic P. Lee, who has served for many years as legislative counsel of the United States Senate, presented a comprehensive statement on this subject at the committee hearing. The record of the hearing also contains other authoritative statements concerning the bureau's utility for Congress. The bureau has established a consultant affiliation with Mr. Herbert Putnam, librarian of the Library of Congress, and with Dr. Herman H. B. Meyer who conducts the legislative reference division of the Library under Mr. Putnam's direction.

"Congress is confronted by a countless number of problems which it can not handle correctly if it fails to take into consideration the laws which have been enacted by the legislatures of the various states.

"In the field of taxation, for instance, the Secretary of the Treasury and the President have very recently emphasized the imperative necessity of such coordination between federal and state statutes on many subjects, such as income taxes, inheritance taxes, sales taxes, franchise taxes, gasoline taxes, tobacco taxes, and many more. Such coordination is also essential in regulating utilities which are operated in more than one state, including buses, railroads, and power developments.

"The judicial processes of the states and the nation are essentially interrelated. The adequate enforcement of many federal laws depends upon a coordinated system."
"In all matters which involve joint financing by state and federal governments, Congress must maintain an accurate familiarity with the acts of the state legislatures. Examples in this field include, for instance, legislation concerning highways, public health, and public welfare.

"Many of the Federal Government's policies concerning conservation, reclamation, public parks, and public lands also involve problems which require cooperation and legislative coordination.

"Such examples might be enumerated almost without limit. But these few instances, coupled with the testimony of Mr. Frederic P. Lee, Prof. Joseph P. Chamberlain, Prof. Herbert Harley, and other witnesses, sufficiently establish the necessity for this bureau.

"The present need for a reduction of governmental expenditures will inevitably involve us in some preliminary outlay for research and planning. It is not sound economy to perform a major operation in an amateur manner. This committee is charged with the responsibility of providing such research and planning services for Congress. The present resolution is recommended as a significant step in that direction.

"This essential interrelation between the laws of the Federal Government and those of the various states, makes it imperative that we shall have prompt, direct, and adequate contacts—"