FOREWORD

The author of this valuable report, Bernard S. Meyer, is a highly respected judge of the Court of Appeals of the State of New York, now retired. In the main body of this report Judge Meyer surveys, with appropriate constitutional and statutory citations, the judicial retirement provisions in each of the fifty states and the District of Columbia. In each jurisdiction he identifies, for example, existing provisions for mandatory retirement on account of age, for retirement for disability (voluntary and involuntary), and for further judicial service after retirement.

In an initial section entitled “Why Judicial Retirement Laws Should be Changed,” Judge Meyer takes an overall look at the great variety and assortment that exist in the judicial retirement provisions of the fifty-one jurisdictions. Then he follows, in a section entitled “How Judicial Retirement Laws Should Be Changed,” with an explication of the principles that in his judgment should guide a model state judicial retirement law.

Judge Meyer’s report brings together, for the first time, a comprehensive survey of existing state retirement laws, with the carefully considered judgment of a prominent member of the judiciary on how those laws should be changed for the improvement of the administration of justice.

One of Judge Meyer’s proposals would, for example, enable states to make fuller use of retired and senior judges in continued judicial service. This reservoir of available judicial man power is going unused or underused in many states. The judicial leaders in each of the fifty-one jurisdictions can with profit reexamine its judicial retirement laws in light of what other jurisdictions are already doing and with the further benefit of Judge Meyer’s thoughtful proposals.

Judge Meyer has conducted his survey and prepared his report as vice-chair of the Judiciary Committee of the ABA Senior Lawyers Division. That committee and the ABA Joint Judicial Division/Senior Lawyers Division Committee on Senior and Retired Judges have combined to serve as an ad hoc peer review group for the report.

Vincent McKusick
Chief Justice (ret.), Maine Supreme Judicial Court