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Message from the Editor

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Message from the Editor

This was an exciting year for the *Pepperdine Policy Review*. The fall semester began with our first ever Internship Symposium, featuring four academic presentations from second year students on their experiences from last summer. Jill Kissee gave a presentation on her field projects with HOPE in Indonesia, which emphasized the reduction of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Yvonne Mejia gave an overview of her work with Sempra Energy here in Los Angeles which focused on energy distribution for low income families. Kristi Howard gave a talk on her experience working with former House Speaker Newt Gingrich and the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, DC. Finally, Jeremy Grunert gave an account of his travels in Israel and the research projects he completed for NGO Monitor on international law and NGO's in the Mideast conflict. This symposium was a valuable learning experience for first year students seeking internships, and at the same time exposed them to several opportunities available for students with policy degrees. I certainly hope this will become a tradition that continues, and I am extremely grateful to Jill, Yvonne, Kristi, and Jeremy for the time they put into their presentations.

After hitting the ground running with the symposium, our focus quickly turned to the recruitment of authors for Volume IV. This year we have published a record nine papers from diverse fields across the policy sphere. Volume IV leads off with Thomas Just calling attention to the grave situation facing both the environment and the business community with the advent of invasive species like Asian carp into the Great Lakes. Raija Churchill wrote a paper examining the degrees of local autonomy found in the California school system when it comes to education and social values. Sabrina Abu-Hamdeh's paper evaluates the pros and cons of the *Merida Initiative*, which focuses on the cross border drug trafficking problem with Mexico. Odinakachi Anyanwu examines the consequences of the global financial crisis in sub-Saharan Africa. Jill Kissee wrote a follow-on paper to her symposium presentation looking at prevention methods for the spreading HIV/AIDS epidemic in Indonesia. Kelly Faltis provides

an overview and evaluation of educational models for limited English proficient students used by the state of Texas within the framework of the debate over bilingual education and cultural assimilation. Miriam Keim chronicles US national security interests in the Arab/Israeli conflict. SPP Alum and Los Angeles political consultant John Thomas '10 wrote a commentary piece on the political role of unions in local elections. Finally, incoming editor-in-chief Michael Crouch penned a book review of Matt Ridley's *The Rational Optimist*, urging all of us to keep our chins up when it comes to economic disappointments.

Working with our authors, editorial board, professors, and staff has been an extremely rewarding experience. I am truly grateful for the time our authors put into working with us during the editing process. I would also like to thank faculty members Dr. Luisa Blanco, Dr. Wade Graham, Dr. Robert Lloyd, Dr. James Prieger, and Dr. Michael Shires for their academic input on the papers as they were adjusted and perfected for publication. I am also grateful to Christina Ramirez, SPP director of communication, for her help with media and technical support on our website. Finally, it has been an absolute pleasure to work with Monica Klem, our managing editor. Words cannot begin to describe the amount of hard work Monica put into the recruitment, editing, formatting, and publication process. On behalf of everyone on the editorial board, please enjoy Volume IV of the *Pepperdine Policy Review*.

Alexander N. Fondrier
Editor-in-Chief