

EDITOR'S NOTE

By Geoffrey D. Antell

Our modern epoch is defined by the escalating intensity and extensity of change. Public administrators and policy analysts aspire to affect this change for the better. The authors who have contributed to this journal each address rapid changes that have produced an untenable status quo and limited the options available to policymakers. Our interview with Dr. Mitchell Reiss sets the tone by addressing the role of public administrators and policy analysts in the rapidly changing foreign policy arena. In our two education case studies, rapid change has directly impacted the ability of practitioners to implement reform. Two articles, one about the democratic process and another about the response to market distress caused by terrorism, highlight the possibility that policy changes may be occurring too slowly. On the other hand, our health policy article identifies a policy change that may be occurring too quickly and without adequate analysis. In all cases, each author has laid out a well-reasoned policy response and course of action.

Policy Perspectives has sought to publish a volume of academic work that is current, significant and anticipates even greater changes to come. I hope we have succeeded.

In light of the global nature of change, *Policy Perspectives* took the opportunity to sit down with Dr. Mitchell Reiss, Director for Policy Planning at the U.S. Department of State. In our interview, we discussed a range of topics while focusing specifically on the role of the policy analyst. The insights that Dr. Reiss shared, based on both his practical and academic experiences, are beneficial to anyone that aspires to make a difference in the policy arena.

In particular, one of Dr. Reiss' comments has stuck with me. He noted that to affect change, "it is not enough to have good feelings." The five authors

published here all demonstrate courage by turning their good intentions into action. Each stakes out a position in a contentious policy debate and rigorously defends it. Hopefully, their actions will further inspire our readers.

In education, Victor Chen and Nicholas Lee both contribute case studies highlighting the tension between the politics of education reform and its implementation. Nicholas Lee looks at the passage of the Massachusetts referendum on bilingual education and predicts, based on analysis of a similar measure in California, a very complicated implementation process. Victor Chen looks at the academic and distributional implications of Georgia's HOPE scholarship. His analysis highlights the need for more data on the distributional effects and models a scenario under which a disproportionate amount of the cost is borne by those least able to shoulder it.

In anticipation of the upcoming elections, Cheryl Semmel explores changes to voting procedures aimed at improving the ease of voting and, in turn, participatory democracy. She analyzes the costs and benefits of both online voting and mandatory voting-by-mail. In the end, she determines that the appropriate policy is dependent on the location in which it will be implemented.

In response to a mounting global obesity epidemic, a tax on high-calorie, low-nutrition food has gained political traction both domestically and internationally. Lisa Southworth applies a microeconomic framework for evaluating the potential costs and benefits of this tax. Her analysis cautions against rapid implementation and identifies areas that require greater study in order to improve the policy response.

In the wake of September 11th, the federal government implemented a temporary program to stabilize the insurance market and encourage economic

recovery. Michael Stinziano explores alternatives to the current program, which is scheduled to sunset in 2005. His thorough analysis advocates for the extension of the current policy and highlights changes to improve its effectiveness.

This journal would not be possible without the dedication and hard work of a number of people. Primary among them is Diana Schneider, the managing/executive editor. Her commitment, dedication and professionalism were more than I could have asked for in an editing partner. She deserves the full credit for the layout and design of the journal and was invaluable in helping to settle the journal's business relationships. Her substantive contributions to the manuscripts were essential in transforming them into the articles that are published here. It has been a joy to work with Diana; she has made what is often a very intense and brutal process, much more enjoyable.

The hard work of *Policy Perspectives* associate editors — Beth Koprowski, Kate France, Kari Fugitt and Susan Randolph — transformed rough manuscripts into polished journal articles. The journal has been well served by their tireless efforts and persistence in the face of many rounds of editorial revisions, late night meetings and tight production schedules.

Obviously, without authors willing to take a stand on the issues, this journal could not exist as it does. Thank you to each of the authors for staking out a position and defending it, even under sometimes brutal attack. They each displayed grace, maturity and patience in the face of constant critiques from a bevy of editors.

In addition, a cadre of anonymous subject experts reviewed the articles. Their contributions significantly improved the quality of each article, and in turn, the journal as a whole. They deserve special thanks for so willingly volunteering their time and expertise.

I would also like to thank Professor Jill Kasle, the journal's faculty advisor, whose patience and generous time enabled us to markedly improve the quality of our final product. Her insightful questioning was essential in the transformation of academic papers into policy articles.

The entire SPPPA faculty and staff have been invaluable resources. In particular, I would like to thank Professors Kathryn Newcomer, Joseph Cordes, Bill Adams, Lori Brainard, Donna Infeld, Jed Kee and

Mike Worth, who each contributed their guidance and expertise. The support of the SPPPA staff, especially Richard Hylton, Pam Turner and Pete Van Riper, also deserves recognition. I also thank the students of SPPPA for engaging all of us in rigorous debate and exploration of ideas during our short time together in the program.

Finally, I would like to thank my unbelievably patient and understanding family and friends, especially Christina, for enduring me throughout this process. Without their support, this journal would never have come together as it has.

Geoffrey Antell
Editor-in-Chief