The New Revised Code

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The foremost order of business for Ohio's 100th General Assembly was House Bill No. 1, which provided for the recodification, renumbering, and form revision of the entire body of the State's laws. After extensive conferences and debates, the bill was enrolled, signed, and approved by the Governor on February 24, 1953. However, the effective date was set forward to October 1, 1953, in order to afford the Legislature an opportunity to act upon an omnibus bill incorporating necessary amendments before adjournment.

The passage of House Bill No. 1 marks the third time in Ohio's history that its lawmakers have approved a revision of the State's statutes, the first having been submitted in 1880 and the second in 1910. The current revision was authorized by the 96th General Assembly and required seven years for completion. Over 4,000 sections were eliminated from the code by the revisers and were repealed by the Legislature as obsolete, unconstitutional, or unnecessary. The approximately 19,000 sections which remain are arranged in 31 titles composed of 596 chapters. In addition, there are five chapters of general provisions which precede Title I. The titles are arranged alphabetically by subject, excepting the first four, and bear odd numbers to allow for the insertion of new titles which will have even numbers. A decimal system was employed in numbering the sections, with the title and chapter numbers placed to the left of the decimal and the section number to the right. Penalty provisions are not collected in a separate division as they were in the General Code but are distributed throughout according to subject matter. Each penalty section bears the number - -.99 so that it may be easily located. Particular attention was directed to the revision of the headings of the sections, as well as to those of the chapters and titles, so that persons who are familiar with the organizational plan of the Revised Code should find that reference to a general index is seldom necessary.

Anticipating controversies which may arise concerning changes in the language of the General Code sections made during the revision process, the General Assembly clearly indicated that no change in substance was intended. The following addition to Chapter 1 of the General Provisions was concurred in by both houses:

1.24 Declartion of Legislative Intent.

That in enacting this act it is the intent of the General Assembly not to change the law as heretofore expressed

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> by the section or sections of the General Code in effect on the date of enactment of this act. The provisions of the Revised Code relating to the corresponding section or sections of the General Code shall be construed as restatements of and substituted in a continuing way for applicable existing statutory provisions, and not as new enactments.

This provision should allay any fears which may exist as to the adverse effects of inadvertent changes of a substantive nature which are not only possible but practically inevitable in a revision of such magnitude.