Chair’s Letter from Diane L. Akers
The Michigan Green Enterprise Zone is a new and innovative initiative of the ESD Institute of the Engineering Society of Detroit. The Green Zone would be an enterprise and investment corridor running from Flint through Detroit and Ann Arbor to Lansing and may include Windsor or stand-alone areas. The mission of the Green Zone is to attract new capital and industries to Michigan while enhancing existing sources of revenue generation and employment, without significant reliance on public financing, and would be created by enabling legislation in collaboration with local, state, and federal governments.

The ESD Institute will shortly hold an initial symposium that will examine some of the key features of the proposed Green Zone: (1) Legal Risk Mitigation. Focus will be on methods of resolving disputes when they arise, without litigation, and without “fault finding” as a core objective. This will also include examination of collateral effects of legal risk such as insurance options. (2) Sovereign Enterprise and Investment Attributes. What factors will attract investors and entrepreneurs to Michigan and keep them here? The Green Zone will examine methods other than using public funds or tax incentives, with their concomitant governmental entanglements and red tape. (3) Labor/Management Relations. A new model of cooperation and openness between management and labor can make Michigan a world leader in this area. Other important aspects of the Green Zone include quality of life and technology/invention. The ESD Institute anticipates issuing a report after its symposium.

This is obviously an enormously ambitious undertaking, but the need for new ideas for sustainable investment in Michigan has never been greater. If you’d like more information about the Green Zone, visit the ESD Institute’s website at www.esdinstitute.net or the Engineering Society of Detroit’s site at www.esd.org.

DELEG Director Pruss to Speak at BLS Conference
The new director of the State of Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth, Stanley F. “Skip” Pruss, will be the...
keynote speaker at a conference being presented by the Section's Ad Hoc Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability, which will focus on what business lawyers need to know about climate change and the tremendous challenges and opportunities it presents for Michigan businesses. This full day program will include a morning session devoted to current developments in climate change regulation and related economic issues, with speakers representing state and national viewpoints. Following Director Pruss's keynote address at lunch, the afternoon will include breakout sessions that focus on issues related to business law, real property law, tax law, and environmental law.

The conference, which will be jointly sponsored by the Environmental Law Section, will take place on April 22, 2009, at the Inn at St. John's in Plymouth. Be sure to save the date and watch for registration materials.