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FOREWORD

SYMPOSIUM: DIGITAL SIGNATURE AND ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

by ROBERT GILBERT JOHNSTON†

On behalf of both The John Marshall Law School and The John Marshall Journal of Computer and Information Law, we proudly present this landmark symposium on Digital Signature and Electronic Document Verification. It is especially fitting that this symposium addressing cutting-edge developments in technology, business, and law should issue at this time in 1999. First, it is the eve of the new century, and the subjects addressed throughout this symposium will be of critical importance to communications in cyberspace for government and commerce in the online information age of the next millennium. Second, our home state of Illinois has recently enacted its comprehensive Electronic Commerce Security Act which became effective on January 1, 1999, which is expected to become a model statute of great consequence in the United States, and

† Dean Robert Gilbert Johnston, The John Marshall Law School, is licensed to practice law in and has appeared before the Illinois and Hawaii state and federal courts, the Seventh and Ninth Circuit Courts of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court. A major portion of his private practice and his tenure as executive director of Hawaii Legal Services was devoted to representing community groups, private social service agencies, institutionalized persons, and engaging in tort and constitutional litigation. He has represented such groups as the American Friends Service Committee, the Hawaii Association of Retarded Citizens, the Hawaii League of Women Voters and the Queen Liliuokalanai Children's Center. His past activities include chairman of the Chicago Bar Association Committee on Continuing Legal Education, reporter for the Hawaii Penal Revision Committee and reporter for numerous Illinois Judicial Conferences. He was vice-chair of the Jefferson Inn of the American Inns of Court in 1993. Dean Johnston contributed a chapter to THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO PRIVACY (Matthew Bender) and has co-authored, with Professor Kenneth Kandaras, DISCOVERY IN ILLINOIS: FEDERAL AND ILLINOIS PRACTICE, published by Butterworth. He has authored several articles on procedure. Dean Johnston has visited the People's Republic of China, Central and Eastern Europe, Lithuania and the Czech Republic on behalf of the law school.
which is analyzed for the very first time in a law review publication in
this symposium.

Third, 1999 marks the Centennial of The John Marshall Law School
and as part of our year-long celebration of that legacy, we delight in lay-
ing the groundwork for the accomplishments The John Marshall Law
School will record over our next 100 years. We are confident that this
symposium will constitute one such achievement, for the quality of its
authors and their manuscripts guarantee that this symposium will be
influential far into the 21st Century. A significant feature of the hun-
dred-year legacy of The John Marshall Law School has been its foresight
and willingness to lead the way. The John Marshall Journal of Com-
puter & Information Law, now in its 17th year, was one of the very first of
the specialty law reviews devoted to examination of the intersection of
technological developments and legal policy. Our school established the
first-of-its-kind Center For Information Technology & Privacy Law, and
recently expanded that center to create an LLM degree in Information
Technology Law. We are pleased to be offering the first semester-long
law school course in the country on the subject of Domestic and Transna-
tional Digital Signature and Electronic Document Verification. It is par-
ticularly rewarding that several of our alumni and faculty have authored
articles in the present symposium volume.

This volume represents one of the first symposium issues on elec-
tronic document verification in the legal literature. Moreover, we expect
the symposium to be a significant volume for a number of other reasons.
Our panel of academic authors are truly experts in the field, represent-
ing several states and several colleges and universities. To be counted
among our other expert authors are practicing lawyers, including the
country's leading authority on electronic commerce issues (Thomas
Smedinghoff of McBride, Baker & Coles), and the country's leading au-
thority on notarial practice (Charles Faerber of the National Notary As-
sociation). Each article focuses on a topic never before the subject of a
full law review piece. As just one example, consider the groundbreaking
article that proposes a 10-point code of professional responsibility for cer-
tification authorities. In addition to the extensive availability of this
symposium to our subscribers and to others online, arrangements have
been made to distribute complimentary copies of the volume to those at-
tending the 1999 American Society of Notaries Annual Meeting in An-
napolis and the 1999 National Notary Association Annual Convention in
Denver.

Finally, we extend our most sincere thanks to the authors of the ar-
ticles that comprise this historic volume. We are honored that they have
chosen The John Marshall Journal of Computer & Information Law as
the home for their outstanding works.