

# **89<sup>th</sup> Legislature: What Just Happened and How it Affects Your Practice and the Courts**

**Hon. Jerry D. Bullard  
Texas Business Court, Eighth Division**

**State Bar of Texas Appellate Section  
Lunch & Learn Webinar  
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Judge Bullard is an active member of the State Bar of Texas and its Appellate, Litigation, and Legislative/Campaign Law Sections, the Texas Bar College, and the Tarrant County Bar Association. He has also served as a gubernatorial appointee on the Texas Juvenile Justice Board, a Section Representative on the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors, a member of the Texas Supreme Court's Conduct Commission Procedural Rules Task Force, and a member of the State Bar of Texas Court Administration Task Force.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

On Monday, June 2, the regular session of the 89th Legislature came to a close. According to the Texas Legislative Reference Library, a total of 8,719 bills were introduced during the session. A total of 1,183 bills were passed and sent to Governor Abbott. Of that total, 28 were vetoed. The remainder were either signed by the Governor or allowed to become law.

On Thursday, September 4, the second special session ended when the House and Senate adjourned sine die. More than 360 bills were filed during the special session, but only 21 passed both chambers. One bill ([SB 18](#)) was vetoed. The rest have been signed into law. Of the bills that passed, the primary bill impacting the judiciary and civil justice system is HB 16, which is similar to the omnibus courts bill passed during the regular session but was vetoed by the Governor.

The summaries below are based on the content and status of each bill at the time this update was printed. For any additional background information about each bill, please visit Texas Legislature Online at <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us>.

## II. LEGISLATION THAT PASSED - REGULAR SESSION

### A. Business Organizations

#### [SB 29 - Business Entities](#)

- **Summary:** SB 29, filed by [Sen. Bryan Hughes \(R - Mineola\)](#), amends the Texas Business Organizations Code (BOC) and does several things, including the following:
  - Defines a “national stock exchange” to include a Texas stock exchange approved by the securities commissioner.
  - Limits the impact of judicial decisions or laws of other states on the BOC.
  - Provides that a decision by managerial officials to either consider or disregard other state laws or judicial decisions does not constitute or imply a breach of the BOC or any duties existing under Texas law.
  - Allows governing documents of a domestic entity to specify that Texas courts shall serve as the exclusive forum and venue for internal entity claims.

- Allows governing documents of a domestic entity to contain an enforceable waiver of the right to a jury trial concerning any “internal entity claim” (as defined by the BOC).
- Authorizes a corporation to form a committee of independent and disinterested directors to review and approve certain corporate transactions.
- Authorizes a corporation to petition a court having jurisdiction to hold an evidentiary hearing to determine whether the directors appointed to the above-described committee are independent and disinterested, and requires the court to hold a preliminary hearing within 10 days after appropriate notice to shareholders to determine appropriate legal counsel and to hold the substantive hearing promptly.
- Establishes a presumption that directors and officers act in good faith, on an informed basis, in furtherance of the interests of the corporation, and in obedience to the law (i.e., codifies the “business judgment rule”).
- Establishes new thresholds for shareholder actions.
- Provides that, if a corporation has a class or series of voting shares listed on a national exchange (or has affirmatively elected to be governed by the presumption of good faith), neither the corporation nor its shareholders have a cause of action against a director or officer for breach of duty.
- Limits a cause of action for an act or omission of an officer or director to a claim that rebuts the elements of the presumption and proves that the act or omission constituted a breach of duty and the breach involved fraud, intentional misconduct, an ultra vires act, or a knowing violation of law. SB 29 will also require a claimant bringing such claims to plead with particularity the circumstances constituting fraud, intentional misconduct, ultra vires acts, or knowing violations of law.
- Provides that, in a shareholder derivative action, the corporation may petition the court to request a determination of whether the directors are independent or disinterested with respect to the allegations and that any such determination is dispositive in the absence of the discovery of facts not presented in court that constitutes sufficient evidence to prove that a director is not independent and disinterested.

- *Effective date:* May 14, 2025. Because SB 29 was passed by more than two-thirds of all members in each chamber, the bill became effective once signed by Governor Abbott.
- [Bill Analysis for SB 29](#): House Research Organization
- [Fiscal Note for SB 29](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Fiscal Note for HB 15](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis for HB 15](#): House Research Organization
- [Status of SB 29](#): On March 10, 2025, [State Affairs](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 03:17:45 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 29 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On March 31, the bill, as amended, was voted out of committee (Vote: 10-0). SB 29 was amended to include, among other things, changes to sections 21.364 (Vote Required to Approve Fundamental Action) and 21.365 (Changes in Vote Required for Certain Matters) of the BOC; further define the process for determining whether directors appointed to review and approve certain transactions are independent and disinterested; and further address the liability (and any limitations thereto) of members of certain business entities organized under the BOC (e.g., limited liability companies and limited partnerships).
- On April 3, 2025, by a vote of 29-2, the full Senate passed SB 29. The bill was subsequently forwarded to the House where it was referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#). By a 9-1 vote, the committee voted SB 29 out of committee without amendments. The full House passed SB 29 by a 109-7 vote.
- [Status of HB 15](#): On March 12, 2025, [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:01:10 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 15 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On April 13, by a 7-4 vote, the bill was voted out of committee as amended.

## **B. Judiciary**

### **[HB 40 - Business Court](#)**



- **Summary:** HB 40, filed by [Rep. Brooks Landgraf \(R – Odessa\)](#), makes numerous changes to Chapter 25A of the Government Code (business court statute), including the following:
  - Expands the definition of “qualified transaction” to include a series of related transactions applying to one or more parties and reduces the minimum consideration value for qualified transactions from \$10 million to \$5 million.
  - Adds to the court’s jurisdiction an action (1) arising out of the BOC, including an action over which a district court has original or exclusive jurisdiction by the BOC; (2) arising or related to intellectual property and trade secrets; and (3) to enforce an arbitration agreement or review an arbitral award involving an amount of \$5 million; and (4) MDL pretrial matters if the court otherwise has jurisdiction. Reduces the amount-in-controversy threshold from \$10 to \$5 million for non-corporate governance-related claims (e.g., breach of contract).
  - Amends venue provision to establish venue by law, governing documents, or written agreement.
  - Requires OCA to report on the case activity of a court during the prior year.
  - Revises the 30-day removal timeline provisions to include service of process as a triggering event for a party to seek removal.
  - Entitles a business court judge to additional compensation from the state in an amount equal to a district judge’s county supplement.
  - Permits pre-September 1, 2024 cases that are within the business court's jurisdiction may be transferred to and heard by the business court on an agreed motion of a party and the business court's permission. The Texas Supreme Court (SCOTX) must adopt transfer-implementation rules.
  - Removes the sunset provisions for the unfunded Second, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Ninth, and Tenth Divisions, and move Montgomery County in the Eleventh Division.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. However, except for the provisions of HB 40 applicable to pre-September 1, 2024 claims, the changes in the law under HB 40 will apply to civil actions commenced on or after September 1, 2024.

- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis](#): House Research Organization

[**Note:** [Sen. Bryan Hughes \(R – Mineola\)](#) filed a similar placeholder bill ([SB 2883](#)), which was referred to [Jurisprudence](#) on April 7 and heard on May 7: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 30:45 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 2883 are listed here: [Witness List](#) (p. 2). The bill was left pending.]

- **Status:** [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 9, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 04:42:30 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 40 are listed here: [Witness List](#) (p. 1). On April 14, the bill, as amended, was voted out of committee (vote: 6- 5). By a vote of 99-40, the full House passed HB 40, as amended, on May 13, 2025. The bill was forwarded to the Senate on May 14 and referred to [Jurisprudence](#) on May 15. The [Jurisprudence](#) committee conducted a hearing on May 21: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). The bill was discussed at the 04:40 mark and subsequently voted out of committee as amended. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 40 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On May 28, the full Senate passed HB 40 by a 25-6 vote. The House did not concur with the Senate's changes, which led to the creation of a conference committee to resolve the differences. Both chambers approved the conference committee report.

**[SB 293 – Discipline of Judges by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, Notice of Reprimands, Judicial Compensation, and Judicial Transparency Information Reports \(Companion: \[HB 1761\]\(#\)\)](#)**

- **Summary:** SB 293, filed by [Sen. Joan Huffman \(R – Houston\)](#), amends multiple sections of the Texas Government Code and does the following:
  - *Meaning of Conduct Inconsistent with Proper Performance of Judicial Duties.* SB 293 adds/clarifies that a “failure to meet deadlines set by statute or binding court order” falls within the definition of “wilful or persistent conduct that is clearly inconsistent with the proper performance of a judge’s duties” under the Texas Constitution, which would include failing to "meet deadlines, performance measures or standards, or clearance rate requirements set by statute, administrative rule, or binding court order"; a "persistent or wilful violation of Article

17.15, Code of Criminal Procedure"; or the "persistent or wilful violation of Section 22.302(a) [Use of Teleconferencing Technology]".

- *Imposition of Administrative Sanctions for False Complaints:* SB 293 authorizes the State Commission on Judicial Conduct (SCJC) to impose administrative sanctions (between \$500 and \$10,000 depending on frequency of the complaints) on those who knowingly file false complaints.
- *Complaint procedures:* SB 293 requires SCJC staff to conduct a preliminary investigation and draft recommendations for action as soon as practicable after a complaint is filed. If, after completing a preliminary investigation, SCJC staff determines that a full investigation is necessary, the SCJC may commence the investigation, providing written notice to the judge who is the subject of the complaint. SCJC staff would be required to prepare and file a report with details about each complaint within 10 business days before a scheduled SCJC meeting, instead of 120 days after the complaint was filed. The bill requires that such reports include each complaint in which a preliminary investigation had been conducted but not finalized, the results of the preliminary investigation, and SCJC staff's recommendations for action regarding the complaint. A person who files a complaint may submit additional documents to support the complaint no later than 45 days after the complaint is filed.
- SB 293 increases the amount of time in which the SCJC is required to act on a recommendation from within 90 days to within 120 days of the first SCJC meeting in which the complaint was included in a report. The SCJC is required to finalize a report at the same meeting at which it determined action was required. After this meeting, the SCJC provides the judge who was the subject of the complaint with written notice of the action within five days if the SCJC determines no further action will be taken or within seven days if the SCJC intends to take further action on the complaint. If determined appropriate, notice of the decision will have to be posted on the SCJC website.
- Upon completion of the investigation and the submission of recommendations, the SCJC is required to provide the judge who was the subject of the complaint with written notice of the complaint, the results of the investigation, recommendations for action, and the judge's right to attend each SCJC meeting at which the complaint was included in the report.

- For complaints involving substance abuse or the physical or mental capacity of a judge, SCJC must conduct a preliminary investigation and present the results to each SCJC member no later than 30 days after the complaint was filed. If SCJC determines that the alleged substance abuse or physical or mental capacity brings into question the judge's ability to perform the judge's official duties, then SCJC is required to provide the judge written notice of the complaint and subpoena the judge to appear before the commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting. If, following the judge's appearance, the SCJC requires the judge to submit to a physical or mental examination, SCJC must suspend the judge from office with pay for a period not to exceed 90 days, notify the judge of the suspension in writing, order the judge to submit to the examination, and provide the judge written notice of the examination no later than 10 days before the examination date. If, after receiving the written examination report of the physician's deposition testimony concerning the report, the SCJC determines the judge is unable to perform official duties because of the substance abuse or physical or mental incapacity, SCJC must recommend that SCOTX suspend the judge from office or enter into an indefinite voluntary agreement with the judge for suspension with pay until SCJC determines the judge is physically and mentally competent to resume official duties. If the judge refuses to submit to a SCJC-ordered examination, SCJC may petition the district court for an order to compel the judge to submit to an examination and recommend to SCOTX that the judge be suspended from office.
  
- SB 293 revises the number of days that the SCJC could order an extension for finalization of the report in extenuating circumstances from 270 days from the complaint being filed to 240 days from the first SCJC meeting that included the complaint in the report. The SCJC would have to notify the following individuals or entities if an extension of time is ordered: the governor, lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, the presiding officer of each legislative standing committee with primary jurisdiction over the judiciary, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, the Office of Court Administration (OCA), and the presiding judge of the administrative judicial region in which is located the court of the judge who is the subject of the complaint serves. SB 293 disallows further extensions unless a complaint against a judge alleges multiple instances of misconduct or SCJC determines that multiple complaints have been submitted against the judge, in which case SCJC can order an additional extension of no more than 90 days after the initial extension expires.

- *Notification of law enforcement agency investigation:* The SCJC is required, on notice by any law enforcement agency investigating an action related to a complaint, to continue an investigation if it would not jeopardize a law enforcement investigation regarding the conduct subject to the complaint. SB 293 also allows SCJC to issue a censure or sanction based on the complaint.
- *Dismissal of complaints involving an allegation or appearance of misconduct or disability:* After conducting a preliminary investigation, if SCJC staff determines administrative deficiencies in the complaint preclude further investigation, SCJC staff may terminate the investigation and dismiss the complaint without action by SCJC. The SCJC shall notify the judge in writing of a dismissed complaint not more than five business days after the dismissal date.
- However, if the SCJC does not determine that an allegation or appearance of misconduct or disability is unfounded or frivolous, the SCJC must conduct a full investigation and, no more than seven business days after SCJC staff commences a full investigation, notify the judge in writing of (1) the commencement of the investigation, (2) the nature of the allegation or appearance of misconduct or disability being investigated, and (3) the judge's right to attend each SCJC meeting at which the complaint is included in the report filed with SCJC members.
- *Review of SCJC decision:* A judge sanctioned or censured by the SCJC may request a review of the decision. If the SCJC issues a public reprimand based on the judge's "persistent or wilful violation" of article 17.15 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure (i.e., rules for setting bail amounts), the SCJC shall provide notice of the reprimand to the governor, lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, the presiding officer of each legislative standing committee with primary jurisdiction over the judiciary, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, the Office of Court Administration (OCA), and the presiding judge of the administrative judicial region in which is located the court of the judge who is the subject of the complaint serves.
- *Suspension from Office:* No later than the 21st day after the date the SCJC initiates formal proceedings against a judge based on the judge's "persistent or wilful violation of Article 17.15, Code of Criminal Procedure," the SCJC shall recommend to the Texas Supreme Court that the judge be suspended from office pursuant to Section 1-a, Article V, Texas Constitution.

- *Limitations:* Unless SCJC determines good cause exists for investigating a complaint otherwise barred by limitations, SCJC may not investigate and must dismiss complaints filed after the seventh anniversary of the date (1) the alleged misconduct occurred or (2) the complainant knew or should've known of the alleged misconduct.
- *False complaints:* SCJC may impose administrative sanctions against a person who knowingly files a false complaint. The maximum penalties range from \$500 to \$10,000 depending on the number of false complaints filed.
- *District Court Reporting:* No later than July 20 or January 20, as applicable, a district court judge is required to submit to the presiding judge of the administrative judicial region in which the judge's court sits certain information for the preceding six-month period. Each judge must attest to: (1) the number of hours the judge presided over the judge's court at the courthouse or another court facility; and (2) the number of hours the judge performed judicial duties other than those described in (1), including the number of hours the judge performed case-related duties; performed administrative tasks; and completed continuing education. The presiding judge of each administrative region is required to submit the district judge information to OCA in a manner prescribed by SCOTX, which is required to promulgate rules establishing guidelines and instructions regarding the submission of district judge information.
- *Lists of retired and former judges subject to assignment:* Judges that had a public reprimand or censure by the SCJC reviewed and rescinded would be eligible to be named on the list of retired and former judges subject to assignment by a presiding judge. Judges who received more than one of any other type of public sanction will be ineligible to be named on the list, except for public sanctions that were reviewed and rescinded.
- *Appellate court remote proceedings:* Absent exigent circumstances, an appellate court must participate in oral argument presented through teleconferencing technology from a courtroom or other facility provided by the court or the state of Texas.
- *Summary judgment procedures:* Trial courts must hear (via oral argument or written submission) within 45 days after a response is filed and provide a written ruling with 90 days after submission or argument. Compliance with the deadlines must be reported to OCA on a quarterly basis.

- *Judicial compensation:* The annual base salary of a district court and business court judge would be increased to \$175,000. SB 293 also includes a phase-out of the link between judicial compensation and legislative pensions.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes to the law under SB 293 relating to judicial conduct would apply only to an allegation of misconduct received by the SCJC on or after the effective date, regardless of whether the alleged conduct occurred or was committed before, on, or after the effective date.
- **Note:** [Rep. Jeff Leach \(R – Allen\)](#) filed the companion House bill.
- [SB 293 Bill Analysis](#): Senate Research Center
- [SB 293 Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [HB 1761 Bill Analysis](#): House Research Organization
- [HB 1761 Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Status of HB 1761: Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 9, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings here: [Part 1](#) (testimony begins around the 00:02:10 mark) and [Part 2](#). Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 1761 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On April 28, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee as amended. [**Note:** The version approved by the committee included (1) a requirement for courts of appeals to conduct oral arguments using teleconferencing technology from a courtroom or other court-related facility; (2) deadlines for trial courts to hear (45 days after response is filed) and rule on (90 days after submission) motions for summary judgment; and (3) a 30% pay raise for judges.]
- [Status of SB 293:](#) On March 5, 2025, [Finance](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:22:00 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 293 are listed here: [Witness List](#). The bill was unanimously voted out of committee (15-0) as amended. By a vote of 30-1, the full Senate passed SB 293 on March 12 and was forwarded to the House. On May 14, [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill and unanimously voted it out of committee as amended. The full House amended SB 293 and passed the bill by a 128-4 vote on May 27. [**Note:** Among other things, the floor amendments reduced the district judge

reporting requirement from quarterly to semi-annually and increased judiciary base pay by 25%.]

**SB 2878 - Omnibus Courts Bill (Companion: HB 5060)**

- **Summary:** HB 5060 and SB 2878, filed by [Rep. Jeff Leach \(R – Allen\)](#) and [Sen. Bryan Hughes \(R – Mineola\)](#) respectively, amends various chapters of the Government Code as it relates to district courts, statutory county courts, visiting judges, the business court, jurors, and court administration. For example, the bill, among other things:
  - Creates new judicial districts in Brazoria, Colorado, Comal, Ellis, Fort Bend, Harris, Lavaca, Rockwall, and Williamson Counties; expand or alter the concurrent jurisdiction of the Atascosa County Court at Law, the Bowie County Court at Law, the Hidalgo County Courts at Law, the Potter County Courts at Law, and the Tom Green County Court at Law; designate preferences for certain courts in Henderson and Tarrant Counties; and eliminate the eminent domain jurisdiction of a statutory probate court in Montgomery County.
  - Increases the maximum amount-in-controversy for certain county courts at law from \$250,000 to \$325,000.
  - Authorizes the presiding judge of the statutory probate courts to assign a former or retired justice of an appellate court to hear certain cases and would permit a former or retired justice of an appellate court to be assigned by the presiding judge to hold court.
  - Entitles a judge of a division of the business court to an annual salary supplement from the state in an amount equal to the difference between the judge's annual base salary from the state and the maximum combined base salary from all state and county sources paid to a district judge.
  - Requires the district clerk to prepare a list of certain persons disqualified from serving as a grand juror and send a copy of the list to certain officials.
  - Revises the qualifications to be a juror and the requirements for documenting and transmitting names of persons ineligible to be jurors. It also provides that certain courts may appoint a spoken language interpreter who is not a certified or licensed court interpreter under certain conditions.



- Prohibits a party from filing a notice of appeal in a civil case requesting assignment of the appeal to the Fifteenth Court of Appeals unless the notice includes a matter arising out of or related to the case that is within the court's exclusive intermediate appellate jurisdiction.
- Amends certain procedures for contesting constitutional amendment elections.
- Amends judicial education requirements to include elder abuse and neglect.
- Creates places for two additional justices on the Fifteenth Court of Appeals, one of which will be filled during the fourth year following the court's creation (2028). The other seat will be filled during the fifth year following the court's creation (2029).
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025; however, there are various provisions of the bill (mostly court creation dates) that will become effective on dates other than September 1, 2025.
- [Bill Analysis](#): Senate Research Center
- [Fiscal Note for HB 5060](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Fiscal Note for SB 2878](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Status of HB 5060](#): [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 23, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 07:11:40 mark. The bill was left pending.
- [Status of SB 2878](#): On April 16, 2025, [Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:00:40 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 2878 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On May 7, the bill (as amended) was unanimously voted out of committee. The Senate unanimously passed SB 2878 (as amended) and forwarded to the House on May 12. The [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) committee unanimously voted the bill (as amended) out of committee on May 21. By a vote of 132-2, the full House passed SB 2878. A conference committee was appointed to reconcile the differences between the Senate and House versions of the bill.

On June 22, Governor Abbott vetoed SB 2878 for the reasons stated in his [veto proclamation](#). According to the proclamation, the bill will be included in a special session.

**[SJR 27 - Constitutional Amendment Regarding State Commission on Judicial Conduct Membership](#)**

- **Summary:** SJR 27, filed by [Sen. Joan Huffman \(R – Houston\)](#), would, among other things, amend the Texas Constitution and change the composition of the SCJC in the following manner:
  - Six judges or justices of courts in this state appointed by SCOTX (two of whom must be trial court judges) with the advice and consent of the Senate.
  - Seven citizens appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, who are least 35 years of age.
  - A person may not be appointed to or remain on the SCJC if the person does not maintain a physical residence in Texas or has ceased to retain the qualifications specified in the Texas Constitution.
  - SJR 27 would limit the SCJC’s authority to issue private admonitions, warnings, or reprimands to only those judges or justices who have not been previously issued an order by the SCJC and in response to a complaint or report other than a complaint or report alleging that the person engaged in conduct constituting a criminal offense.
  - SJR 27 would also authorize the SCJC to recommend to the Texas Supreme Court suspension for judicial misconduct and that a judge or justice be suspended without pay for a specific period under certain circumstances.
- *Effective date:* The constitutional amendments under SJR 27 would become effective upon the affirmative vote of Texas voters at an election held on November 4, 2025.
- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis](#): Senate Research Center
- [Status](#): [State Affairs](#) conducted a hearing on the resolution on March 27, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#).

Testimony begins around the 00:00:20 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SJR 27 are listed here: [Witness List](#) (p. 16). On April 7, 2025, the resolution was unanimously voted out of committee. The full Senate subsequently passed the resolution, as amended, on April 14. The Senate floor amendment further changed the composition of the SCJC to be as follows:

- The resolution was forwarded to the House, referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#), voted out of committee (as amended) on May 21. By a vote of 119-17, the full House adopted SJR 27 on May 26, 2025.

### **C. Uniform Trade Secrets Act – Sealing of Documents**

#### **[HB 4081 - Sealing of Certain Documents Alleged to Contain Trade Secrets](#)**

- **Summary:** HB 4081, filed by [Cody Vasut \(R – Angleton\)](#), requires a party in an action related to trade secrets who seeks to seal a document containing that party’s own alleged trade secret to file with a trial court a notice of sealing and an affidavit that generally describes the type of information contained in the document; provides contact information for subsequent notice of any motion to unseal the document; and sets forth the factual basis for the party’s allegation that the information constitutes a trade secret.
  - Additionally, the party must deliver a copy of the document to be sealed to the trial court in a sealed envelope labeled to identify the corresponding notice of sealing and serve a copy of the notice, affidavit, and document on each other party to the action.
  - A party filing a document that the party knows another person alleges to contain the person’s trade secret must: (1) file with the trial court a notice of sealing and a statement generally describing the type of information contained in the document and identifying the person who alleges the document contains the person’s trade secret; (2) deliver a copy of the document to be sealed to the trial court in a sealed envelope labeled to identify the corresponding notice of sealing; and (3) serve a copy of the notice, statement, and document on each other party to the action and any person who alleges the document contains the person’s trade secret who is not a party to the action.
  - No later than the 14th day after the date a person who alleges a document contains the person’s trade secret receives a notice of sealing with respect to the document, the person must file with a trial court in the same numbered cause an affidavit: (1) generally describing the type of

information contained in the document; (2) providing contact information for subsequent notice of any motion to unseal the document; and (3) setting forth the factual basis for the person's allegation that the information in the document constituted a trade secret. If the trial court receives a notice, statement, and sealed document, the document must be treated as filed under seal until the time for filing an affidavit expires and, if no affidavit is timely filed, the document will be treated as publicly filed until an affidavit is filed.

- Once the trial court receives a notice, affidavit, and sealed document, the document shall be treated as permanently filed under seal. As a matter of right, at any time before or after judgment, any person may intervene in a trade secrets-related action to seal or unseal a document. If a person alleges the person's trade secret was filed of public record, the person could seal the document containing the alleged trade secret by taking the same actions with respect to the document that a party to an action is authorized to take with respect to the party's alleged trade secret.
- The trial court retains continuing jurisdiction to seal or unseal a document filed under these provisions. Any person may move to unseal any document filed under seal. The motion and notice of hearing must be served on the parties to the action in which the document was filed, and on the person who submitted an affidavit by certified mail, return receipt requested, by the 14th day before any hearing on the motion in the trial court.
- The trial court must grant the motion and unseal all or part of the document if the person who alleges that the document contains the person's trade secrets fails to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence that the document, or a part of the document, contains a trade secret.
- If a trial court determines that only a part of the document should be unsealed, the trial court must redact all information that contains a trade secret before providing the document to the movant. An order granting or denying a motion to unseal a document is considered to be severed from the action and is a final judgment that can be appealed by any party or intervenor who participated in the hearing preceding the issuance of the order.
- SCOTX is not permitted to adopt rules that conflict with HB 4081.

- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes in the law reflected in HB 4801 will apply only to a document filed in an action on or after the effective date.
- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis](#): House Research Organization
- *Status:* [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 9, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 04:05:30 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 4081 are listed here: [Witness List](#) (p. 5). On April 14, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee and was subsequently passed in the House by a 140-5 vote. The bill was forwarded to the Senate on May 6 and referred to [State Affairs](#) on May 7. The committee conducted a hearing on May 22 and then unanimously voted the bill out of committee as amended. On May 28, the full Senate unanimously passed HB 4081. The House concurred with the Senate's changes.

### III. LEGISLATION THAT FAILED TO PASS

#### A. Administrative Law

##### [HB 606 - De Novo Review and Interpretation of State Laws and Agency Rules by Reviewing Court Judges](#)

- **Summary:** HB 606, filed by [Rep. Brian Harrison \(R - Midlothian\)](#), would require a judge or administrative law judge (ALJ) to interpret a statute, rule, or other guidance issued by a state agency *de novo*, without deference to an agency's interpretation of the provision. HB 606 would also require a judge or ALJ to resolve the question of an ambiguous provision of state law in favor of limiting state agency authority.
- *Effective date:* Immediately if passed by two-thirds of all members in each chamber. Otherwise, September 1, 2025.
- *Status* Referred to the [Committee on Delivery of Government Efficiency](#) on March 3, 2025.

## B. Attorneys/Practice of Law

### [HB 1363 - Implicit Bias Training for Judges, Judicial Officers, Court Personnel, and Attorneys](#)

- **Summary:** HB 1363, filed by [Rep. Ana Hernandez \(D - Houston\)](#), would require judges, certain court personnel, and attorneys to receive training or continuing education on implicit bias regarding racial, ethnic, gender, religious, age, mental disability, and physical disability and sexual harassment issues, and on bias-reducing strategies to address the manner in which unintended biases and sexual harassment issues undermine confidence in the legal system. There would be different requirements for attorneys and the judiciary and other court-related personnel under the proposed law. Attorneys would be required to complete one hour of continuing education for each compliance period. Judicial branch employees would be required to complete two hours of training every two years.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. Rules necessary to provide the training required under HB 1363 would have to be adopted by January 1, 2026.
- **[Note:** In 2021 and 2023, Rep. Hernandez filed similar bills ([HB 2714](#) and [HB 1627](#)), but they died in committee.]
- **Status:** [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 2, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:39:35 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 1363 are listed here (pp. 1-2): [Witness List](#). On April 28, by a 6-5 vote, the bill was voted out of committee.

### [HB 1387 - Bar Exam Eligibility Requirements](#)

- **Summary:** HB 1387, filed by [Rep. Wes Virdell \(R - Brady\)](#), would amend Chapter 82 of the Texas Government Code and modify the eligibility requirements for bar examinees. Specifically, sections 82.022 and 82.024 would be amended to permit a person to sit for the Texas bar exam if they have at least two years of “practical experience in the legal field”, which could be satisfied by completing a two-year apprenticeship supervised by a Texas-licensed attorney or by having at least two years of full-time employed professional employment as a Texas paralegal.

- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The Supreme Court and Board of Law Examiners would be required to adopt rules implementing the eligibility requirements as soon as practicable after the effective date.
- *Status:* [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 23, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 03:22:40 mark. The bill was left pending.

### **HB 1528 - Licensing and Regulation of Legal Paraprofessionals**

- **Summary:** HB 1528, filed by [Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins \(D - San Antonio\)](#), would amend the Texas Government Code to authorize SCOTX to adopt rules “relating to an individual’s eligibility for examination for issuance of a legal paraprofessional license and to the manner in which the examination is conducted.” HB 1528 would also establish eligibility requirements, require an attorney to supervise each licensee for up to one year, and allow a licensee to practice in JP courts without attorney supervision. HB 1528 would also direct the Board of Law Examiners to vet qualifications of each candidate for licensure.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. SCOTX would be required to adopt rules implementing the law as soon as practicable after the effective date.
- **[Note:** Rep. Gervin-Hawkins has also filed two similar bills ([HB 2386](#) and [HB 2624](#)) that not only authorize the Supreme Court to only adopt rules for licensing and establish educational and eligibility standards, one (HB 2386) would also establish a legal paraprofessional licensing pilot program in cooperation with the University of Texas and Texas A&M University systems, and the other (HB 2624) would create a specialty license in specific types of legal practice that a paraprofessional may conduct without the supervision of an attorney (i.e., family law, estate planning and probate law, consumer debt law, and civil law).]
- **Status of HB 1528:** Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 12, 2025.
- **Status of HB 2386:** Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 14, 2025.

**HB 5104 – Membership In and Fees Collected by the State Bar of Texas and Disciplinary Procedures for Licensed Attorneys**

- **Summary:** HB 5104, filed by [Rep. Nate Schatzline \(R – Fort Worth\)](#), would amend the State Bar Act to, among other things, eliminate mandatory Bar membership requirements, modify the process for Bar members to approve membership fees, and modify the processes to discipline licensed attorneys and to approve proposed disciplinary rules.
- **Status:** Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on April 7, 2025.

**SB 1073 – Discrimination Against or Burdening Constitutional Rights of Law License Holder or Applicant (Companion: [HB 2969](#))**

- **Summary:** SB 1073, filed by [Sen. Bryan Hughes \(R – Mineola\)](#), would amend the State Bar Act to prohibit rules or policies that: (1) limit an applicant’s ability to obtain a license to practice law in Texas, or a bar member’s ability to maintain or renew the license, based on a sincerely held religious belief; or (2) burden an applicant’s or bar member’s free exercise of religion, freedom of speech regarding a sincerely held religious belief; membership in any religious organization; or freedom of association. A person could seek injunctive relief for violating this prohibition. However, the prohibition would not apply to a State Bar rule or policy adopted or penalty imposed that results in a limitation or burden if the rule, policy, or penalty is: (1) essential to enforcing a compelling governmental purpose and narrowly tailored to accomplish that purpose; or (2) restricts wilful expressions of bias or prejudice in connection with an adjudicatory proceeding.
  - SB 1073 also provides that, in an administrative hearing or a judicial proceeding under the Texas Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act, a person may assert as a defense that a prohibited bar rule, policy, or penalty violates the State Bar Act. However, the person may not raise the violation as a defense to an allegation of sexual misconduct or the prosecution of an offense.
- **Effective date:** September 1, 2025. However, if SB 1073 is passed by a vote of two-thirds of all members elected to each chamber, the changes in the law under the bill would be effective immediately.
- **[Note:** [Rep. Briscoe Cain \(R – Deer Park\)](#) has filed a similar bill ([HB 2969](#)). In 2021 and 2023, [Sen. Charles Perry \(R – Lubbock\)](#) and Sen. Hughes authored similar bills that passed in the Senate, but died in the House after



being voted out of committee. In 2021, the House companion to the Senate version was voted out of committee but died without receiving a floor vote.]

- [Bill Analysis for SB 1073](#): Senate Research Center
- [Fiscal Note for SB 1073](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Fiscal Note for HB 2969](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis for HB 2969](#): House Research Organization
- [Status of SB 1073](#): On February 24, 2025, the bill was referred to [State Affairs](#). The committee conducted a hearing on the bill on March 3: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:41:10 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 1073 are listed here (pp. 8-9): [Witness List](#). On March 13, the bill was voted out of committee (10-1) without amendments. By a vote of 22-9, the full Senate passed SB 1073 on May 14, 2025. On May 14, SB 1073 was forwarded to the House, referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on May 16, and then voted out of committee (6-5 vote) without amendment on May 21.
- [Status of HB 2969](#): [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 23, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:13:30 mark. On May 1, 2025, by a 6-3 vote, HB 2969 was voted out of committee without amendments.

### C. Commercial Vehicle Liability

#### **[SB 39 - Civil Liability of a Commercial Vehicle Owner or Operator](#) (Companion: [HB 4688](#))**

- **Summary:** SB 39, filed by [Sen. Brian Birdwell \(R - Granbury\)](#), would repeal sections 72.054(c), (d), and (e) of the Civil Practice & Remedies Code (CPRC), which currently permit a plaintiff to introduce certain evidence in the first phase of a bifurcated trial to show negligent entrustment. SB 39, as amended in the Senate, would also amend section 72.053(f) to clarify that nothing prevents a claimant from pursuing an ordinary negligence claim against a defendant for "negligent repair, negligent loading, or another similar claim" that is based on the defendant's "independent act of negligence" that does not require a finding of negligence by the employer

"who was operating the defendant's commercial motor vehicle" as a prerequisite to the defendant being found negligent for its conduct.

- **Note:** [Rep. Jeff Leach \(R – Allen\)](#) filed the companion House bill.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes in the law addressed by SB 39 would apply only to an action: (1) commenced on or after the effective date or (2) pending on the effective date and in which the trial, or any new trial or retrial following motion, appeal, or otherwise, begins on or after the effective date. In an action commenced before the effective date, a trial, new trial, or retrial that is in progress on the effective date is governed by the law applicable to the trial, new trial, or retrial immediately before the effective date.
- [Bill Analysis for SB 39](#): Senate Research Center
- [Fiscal Note for SB 39](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Fiscal Note for HB 4688](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Status of SB 39: Transportation](#) conducted a hearing on April 9, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:00:20 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 39 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On April 22, the bill, as amended, was voted out of committee (Vote: 6-3). On April 24, the full Senate passed SB 39 by a 21-10 vote. The bill was forwarded to the House on April 25 and referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on April 29.
- [Status of HB 4688: Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 9, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:05:43 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 4688 are listed here: [Witness List](#) (pp. 7-10). On April 16, the committee voted HB 4688 (as amended) out of committee by a 6-5.

#### D. Damages

##### [SB 30 – Recovery of Damages in Civil Actions](#) (Companion: [HB 4806](#))

- **Summary:** SB 30, as originally filed by [Sen. Charles Schwertner \(R – Georgetown\)](#), sought to amend various CPRC provisions and do the following

(among other things): (1) eliminate the controverting affidavit and provide for a notice of intent to controvert the reasonableness and necessity of health care services; (2) prohibit a party from controverting the reasonableness of medical charges and/or restrict discovery and trial testimony on the reasonableness and necessity of the charges under certain circumstances; (3) prohibit an 18.001 affidavit from being used in another action; (4) amend section 41.001 to revise the definitions of “future damages” (must be “reasonably probable”), “future loss of earnings” (reasonable probability), “mental or emotional pain or anguish”, and “physical pain and suffering”; (5) cap economic damages for health care expenses; and (6) limit future damages for health care expenses.

- The original version of SB 30 also included certain disclosure requirements, such as requiring claimants to disclose to each other party provider statements, any letter of protection, and any written agreement under which a provider may refund, rebate, or remit money to a payor, injured individual, claimant, claimant’s attorney, or a person associated therewith. Claimants would've also been required to identify (1) all providers and authorize other parties to obtain from each provider the injured individual’s medical records, (2) any third-party payor that may have had a legal or contractual obligation to pay for health care services to the individual and any unwritten agreement to refund any money to the above persons; and, (3) if the claimant was referred to a provider, the name and contact information of each person who made the referral and that person’s relation to the injured individual.
- SB 30 also required an award of noneconomic damages to be based on evidence of nature, duration and severity and reflect a rational connection, grounded in evidence, between the injury suffered and dollar amount necessary to provide fair and reasonable compensation, and prohibit an award from being used to punish or penalize a defendant, make an example to others, or serve a social good.
- In the House, SB 30 was significantly amended to primarily address required disclosures and, in certain circumstances, the admissibility of evidence to prove the amount of damages that may be awarded for healthcare expenses; letters of protection and any written agreement under which a provider may refund, rebate, or remit money to a payor, injured individual, claimant, claimant’s attorney, or a person associated therewith; and referral sources.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes in the law would apply to actions commenced on or after the effective date.

**Note:** [Rep. Greg Bonnen \(R – Friendswood\)](#) filed the companion House bill.

- [Bill Analysis for SB 30](#): House Research Organization
- [Fiscal Note for SB 30](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Status of SB 30](#): On March 31, 2025, [State Affairs](#) conducted a hearing on SB 30: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings here: [Part One](#) and [Part Two](#). In Part One, testimony on SB 30 begins around the 03:27:35 mark. In Part Two, testimony on the bill begins around the 00:03:35 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 30 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On April 14, the bill (as amended) was voted out of committee. By a 20-11 vote, the full Senate passed SB 30 (as amended). On April 17, the bill was forwarded to the House, referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on April 22, and voted out of committee, as amended, on May 21. By an 87-51 vote, the full House passed SB 30, as amended. The Senate did not concur with the House amendments, so a conference committee was appointed. The committee could not reach an agreement on the bill.
- [Status of HB 4806](#): On May 7, [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on HB 4806: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings here: [Part One](#) and [Part Two](#). HB 4806 was the only bill heard on May 7, so both links begin and end with testimony about the bill. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 4806 are listed here: [Witness List](#).

### **[HB 939 - Liability Limits for Non-Economic Damages in Personal Injury Claims](#)**

- **Summary:** HB 939, filed by [Rep. Cody Vasut \(R - Angleton\)](#), would amend Chapter 41 of the CPRC and limit the civil liability of a defendant for noneconomic damages in personal injury cases to an amount not to exceed, for each claimant, the greater of five times the economic damages or \$5 million.
- *Effective date:* Immediately if passed by two-thirds of all members in each chamber. Otherwise, September 1, 2025.
- **Status:** Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 6, 2025.

**HB 1419 - Liability Limits for Non-Economic Damages in Personal Injury and Wrongful Death Cases**

- **Summary:** HB 1419, filed by [Rep. Mano DeAyala \(R - Houston\)](#), would amend Chapter 41 of the CPRC and limit civil liability to a claimant for noneconomic damages in personal injury cases to an amount not to exceed:
  - For noneconomic damages awarded as damages for past and future physical pain and suffering, three times the amount awarded to a claimant as damages for past and future health care expenses; and
  - For noneconomic damages awarded as damages for past and future mental or emotional pain or anguish: (1) \$1 million if the claim arises from an event primarily causing emotional injury to the claimant; or (2) \$250,000 if the claim arises from an event primarily causing bodily injury to the claimant.
  - For purposes of the limitations provided under new subsection 41.0025(a), all persons that may be responsible under a vicarious liability theory for satisfying a judgment are treated as a single defendant.
  - HB 1419 would also amend Chapter 71 of the CPRC and limit the civil liability for noneconomic damages in an amount not to exceed \$1 million for each claimant as damages for past and future mental or emotional pain or anguish. For purposes of the limitations provided under new subsection 71.0105(a), all persons that may be responsible under a vicarious liability theory for satisfying a judgment are treated as a single defendant.
  - Beginning on January 1, 2027, and continuing January 1 of each subsequent year, the fixed amount limitation provided by the amendments to Chapter 41 and 71 would increase by 1.75 percent from the prior year's amount.
- *Effective date:* Immediately if passed by two-thirds of all members in each chamber. Otherwise, September 1, 2025.
- **Status:** Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 11, 2025.

**HB 2446 - Relating to Affidavits Concerning Costs and Necessity of Services**

- **Summary:** HB 2446, filed by [Rep. Harold Dutton \(D - Houston\)](#), would amend section 18.001 of the CPRC to provide that a medical bill or other itemized statement of a medical or health care service charging \$50,000 or less that it is supported by an affidavit would (1) be sufficient evidence to

support a finding of fact that the amount charged was reasonable and necessary; and (2) not require supporting expert testimony to support a finding of fact that the amount charged was reasonable or that the service was necessary.

- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes in the law addressed by HB 2446 would apply to an action that commences on or after the effective date.
- [Bill Analysis](#): House Research Organization
- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- *Status:* [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 23, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:07:00 mark. On April 28, HB 2446 was voted out of committee without amendments. On May 12, by a vote of 79-65, the full House passed HB 2446 (as amended) and forwarded to the Senate.

#### **HB 4036 - Liability Limits in a Health Care Liability Claim**

- **Summary:** HB 4036, filed by [Rep. Katrina Pierson \(R – Rockwall\)](#), would amend CPRC sections 74.301 and 74.302 and provide for an adjustment to the noneconomic damages caps based on the consumer price index (CPI). More specifically, the bill provides that, when there is an increase or decrease in the CPI, the liability limit prescribed by the noneconomic damage limitation sections will be increased or decreased, as applicable, by a sum equal to the amount of such limit multiplied by the percentage increase or decrease in the CPI that measures the average changes in prices of goods and services purchased by urban wage earners and clerical workers' families and single workers living alone (CPI-W: Seasonally Adjusted U.S. City Average-All Items), between September 1, 2003, and the time at which damages subject to such limits are awarded by final judgment or settlement.
- *Effective date:* Immediately if passed by two-thirds of all members in each chamber. Otherwise, September 1, 2025. The changes in the law addressed in HB 4036 would apply to a health care liability claim that accrues on or after the effective date.

[**Note:** Similar bills have been filed in previous sessions. For example, bills filed in 2017 ([HB 719](#)), 2019 ([HB 765](#)), 2021 ([HB 501](#)), and 2023 ([HB 536](#)) all died in committee.]

- **Status:** Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 27, 2025.

## **E. Discovery**

### **SB 953 - Eligibility for Pre-Suit Depositions**

- **Summary:** SB 953, filed by [Rep. Nathan Johnson \(D - Dallas\)](#), would amend the CPRC to permit a pre-suit deposition on oral examination or written questions to perpetuate or obtain the person's own testimony or that of any other person for use in an anticipated action, or to investigate a potential claim or action.
- SB 953 would prohibit a pre-suit deposition if the requestor has not sustained actual damages or will not reasonably sustain actual damages in the anticipated action.
- SB 953 would also make the requestor liable for attorney's fees incurred in challenging an illegal request. The bill would also bar SCOTX from modifying or repealing the statute by rule.
- *Effective date:* Immediately if passed by two-thirds of all members in each chamber. Otherwise, September 1, 2025.
- **Status:** Referred to [Jurisprudence](#) on February 13, 2025.

## **F. Judiciary**

### **HB 797 - Discipline of Judges by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct**

- **Summary:** HB 797, filed by [Rep. Jeff Leach \(R - Allen\)](#), would revise certain SCJC procedures related to processing complaints.
- *Complaint procedures:* HB 797 would require SCJC staff to conduct a preliminary investigation and draft recommendations for action as soon as practicable after a complaint was filed. SCJC staff would be required to prepare and file a report with details about certain complaints within 10 business days before a scheduled SCJC meeting, instead of 120 days after the complaint was filed. The bill would require that reports include each complaint in which a preliminary investigation had been conducted but not finalized, the results of the preliminary investigation, and SCJC staff recommendations regarding the complaint.



- HB 797 would increase the amount of time in which SCJC would be required to act on a recommendation from 90 days to within 120 days of the first SCJC meeting in which the complaint was included in a report. SCJC would be required to finalize a report at the same meeting at which it determined action was required. After this meeting, SCJC would provide the judge who was the subject of the complaint with written notice of the action within five days. If determined appropriate, notice of the decision would have to be posted on the SCJC website.
- Upon completion of the investigation and the submission of recommendations, SCJC would be required to provide the judge who was the subject of the complaint with (1) written notice of the complaint, (2) the results of the investigation, (3) recommendations for action, and (4) the judge's right to attend each SCJC meeting at which the complaint would be included in the report.
- The bill would revise the number of days that SCJC could order an extension for finalization of the report in extenuating circumstances from 270 days from the complaint being filed to 240 days from the first SCJC meeting that included the complaint in the report. The bill would remove provisions allowing for further extension.
- *Notification of law enforcement agency investigation:* SCJC would be required, on notice by any law enforcement agency investigating an action related to a complaint, to continue an investigation if it would not jeopardize a law enforcement investigation regarding the conduct made the basis of the complaint. The bill also would allow SCJC to issue a censure or sanction based on the complaint.
- *Review of SCJC decision:* A judge sanctioned or censured by SCJC under the Texas Constitution may request a review of the decision.
- *Lists of retired and former judges subject to assignment:* Judges that had a public reprimand or censure by SCJC reviewed and rescinded would be eligible to be named on the list of retired and former judges subject to assignment by a presiding judge. Judges who received more than one of any other type of public sanction would be ineligible to be named on the list, except for public sanctions that were reviewed and rescinded.
- *Violations of rules for setting bail:* HB 797 would amend the definitions of “willful or persistent conduct that is clearly inconsistent with the proper performance of a judge’s duties” and “incompetency” to include persistent or willful violation of the rules for setting the amount of bail.



- The bill would require SCJC to recommend the suspension of a judge from office to the supreme court within 21 days of initiating formal proceedings against a judge based on the judge's persistent or willful violation of the rules for setting bail.
- If SCJC issued a public reprimand of a judge based on the judge's persistent or willful violation of the rules for setting the amount of bail, SCJC would be required to send notice of the reprimand to certain government officials.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025, and would apply only to an allegation of judicial misconduct received by SCJC on or after the effective date. Former or retired judges who were ineligible to be named on the list of retired and former judges subject to assignment would be struck from the list on the effective date. SCJC would be required to adopt rules to implement the provisions of the bill as soon as practicable after the effective date.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025
- Status: Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 5, 2025.

**HB 831 – Interlocutory Appeals of Orders Regarding the Constitutionality, Effect, or Enforceability of a Statute**

- **Summary:** HB 831, filed by [Rep. Mike Schofield \(R – Katy\)](#), would amend section 51.014 of the CPRC and permit the interlocutory appeal of an order determining that a statute violates the state or federal constitution; bars a statute from taking effect or being enforced; or bars a person, including a state agency or political subdivision, from acting as if a statute is in full force and effect.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025
- Status: Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 5, 2025.

**HB 933 – Jurisdiction of the Texas Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeals (Companion: [SB 1210](#))**

- **Summary:** HB 933, filed by [Rep. David Spiller \(R – Jacksboro\)](#), would amend the Code of Criminal Procedure to provide that SCOTX has jurisdiction to resolve any conflicts between SCOTX and the Court of Criminal Appeals

(CCA) regarding the interpretation of a provision of the Texas Constitution on: (1) submission of a writ of certiorari to the Supreme Court by a party to any proceeding in any Texas court; or (2) certification of a question of law from any federal court.

- *Effective date*: September 1, 2025. However, if HB 933 or SB 1210 passes by a vote of two-thirds of all members elected to each chamber, the changes in the law under either bill would be effective immediately.
- [Note: [Sen. Bryan Hughes \(R – Mineola\)](#) filed the companion Senate bill. In 2023, [Sen. Joan Huffman \(R – Houston\)](#) filed a similar bill ([SB 21](#)), but it died in the House.]
- [Bill Analysis for SB 1210](#): Senate Research Center
- [Fiscal Note for SB 1210](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Fiscal Note for HB 933](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis for HB 933](#): House Research Organization.
- [Status of HB 933](#): On April 2, [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:42:00 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 933 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On April 9, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee without amendments.
- [Status of SB 1210](#): On March 20, 2025, [State Affairs](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:09:30 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 1210 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On March 26, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee without amendments. The full Senate passed SB 1210 on April 10. The bill was forwarded to the House and referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#). On May 21, [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 933 are listed here: [Witness List](#). The bill was left pending.

### **HB 2322 - Annual Base Salaries of State Judges and Justices**

- **Summary:** HB 2322, filed by [Rep. Mike Schofield \(R – Katy\)](#), would amend the Government Code to provide for a cost-of-living adjustment for judicial salaries based on changes in the Consumer Price Index.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025, but the changes in the law under HB 2322 would apply starting with the state fiscal biennium beginning on September 1, 2027.
- **[Note:** Rep. Schofield filed similar bills in 2021 and 2023, but they died in committee.]
- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis](#): House Research Organization
- **Status:** [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 9, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:55:000 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 2322 are listed here: [Witness List](#) (p. 1). On April 24, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee without amendments.

### **HB 2986 - Relating to Authority of an Appellate Court to Lift a Stay in Connection with an Interlocutory Appeal**

- **Summary:** HB 2986, filed by [Rep. Joe Moody \(D – El Paso\)](#), would amend section 51.014 of the CPRC to authorize the appellate court to temporarily lift a stay for a specific and limited time on a party's motion if the court determines that lifting the stay is necessary only for the specific and limited purpose of preventing irreparable harm to a party or the public.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025.
- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis](#): House Research Organization
- **Status:** On March 26, 2025, [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:02:25 mark. Witnesses

who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 2986 are listed here: [Witness List](#) (pp. 6-7). On April 3, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee without amendments. The full House passed HB 2986, as amended, on April 24. The bill was forwarded to the Senate on April 24 and referred to [State Affairs](#).

#### **[HB 3647 - Appeals from Orders Granting or Denying a Governmental Unit's Plea to the Jurisdiction](#)**

- **Summary:** HB 3647, filed by [Rep. Tom Oliverson \(R – Cypress\)](#), would amend section 51.014 of the CPRC and provide that an interlocutory appeal based on a plea to the jurisdiction by a governmental unit does not apply with respect to a mandamus action or a claim alleging the performance of an ultra vires act.
- HB 3647 would also amend section 51.015 of the CPRC to assess costs and attorney’s fees to the governmental unit for an unsuccessful appeal.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes in the law addressed by HB 3647 would apply to orders issued on or after the effective date.
- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- **Status:** [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 9, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 03:58:30 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 3647 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On April 24, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee without amendments.

#### **[HB 4080 - Compensation of a District Judge and Associated Retirement Benefits of Certain Other Elected Officials](#)**

- **Summary:** HB 4080, filed by [Rep. Cody Vasut \(R – Angleton\)](#), would, among other things, amend the Government Code and increase the base salary of district court and business court judge to \$182,000.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025.
- **Status:** Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 27, 2025.

### **HB 4797 - Appellate Court Reorganization**

- **Summary:** HB 4797, filed by [Rep. Keresa Richardson \(R – McKinney\)](#), would amend the Government Code to reorganization the intermediate appellate courts and combine the First through Fourteenth Courts of Appeals into five new districts. Under HB 4797, the reorganized courts of appeals would be as follows:
  - District A – First, Ninth, and Fourteenth (22 justices)
  - District B – Second and Tenth (10 justices)
  - District C – Third, Seventh, and Eleventh (13 justices)
  - District D – Fourth, Eighth, and Thirteenth (16 justices)
  - District E – Fifth, Sixth, and Twelfth (19 justices)
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025.
- **Status:** Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on April 3, 2025.

### **HB 5067 - Jurisdiction of the Fifteenth Court of Appeals**

- **Summary:** HB 5067, filed by [Rep. Jeff Leach \(R – Allen\)](#), would amend section 22.220 of the Government Code to clarify that no civil notice of appeal filed in a trial court shall designate that it should be assigned to the Fifteenth Court of Appeals unless the matter being appealed falls within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Fifteenth Court of Appeals.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. However, if HB 5067 is passed by a vote of two-thirds of all members elected to each chamber, the changes in the law under the bill would be effective immediately. The changes in the law addressed in HB 5067 would apply to a notice of appeal filed on or after the effective date.
- **Fiscal Note:** Legislative Budget Board
- **Status:** [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 16, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 01:34:50 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 5067 are listed here:

[Witness List](#). On April 28, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee as amended.

### **SB 311 - Writ Power of the Texas Supreme Court**

- **Summary:** SB 311, filed by [Sen. Bryan Hughes \(R – Mineola\)](#), would amend section 22.002(a) of the Texas Government Code and remove the following from the list of individuals and entities against whom the Texas Supreme Court can issue a writ of procedendo, certiorari, quo warranto, or mandamus: “a statutory county court judge, a statutory probate court judge, a district judge, a court of appeals or a justice of a court of appeals, or any officer of state government.” However, the bill would expressly prohibit the Supreme Court from issuing writs against the governor.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes in the law would apply only to writ applications filed in the Supreme Court on or after the effective date.
- [SB 311 Bill Analysis](#): Senate Research Center
- [SB 311 Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- **Status:** On March 20, 2025, [State Affairs](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:24:00 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 311 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On March 26, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee without amendments. By a vote of 23-7, the full Senate passed SB 311 on April 10.

### **SB 1292 - Authority of Appellate Courts to Issue Temporary Orders in Connection with Interlocutory Appeals**

- **Summary:** SB 1292, filed by [Sen. Nathan Johnson \(D – Dallas\)](#), would amend section 51.014 of the CPRC to authorize an appellate court to "enlist the assistance of the trial court" in hearing evidence, making fact findings, and making recommendations relating to the appellate court's authority to issue temporary orders necessary to preserve a party's rights until the appeal is disposed.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025.
- **Status:** Referred to [Jurisprudence](#) on February 28, 2025.

### **SB 1719 - Authority of Texas Supreme Court to Adopt Certain Rules**

- **Summary:** SB 1719, filed by [Sen. Bryan Hughes \(R – Mineola\)](#), would, among other things, repeal section 22.004(c) of the Government Code, which states as follows:
  - “So that the supreme court has full rulemaking power in civil actions, a rule adopted by the supreme court repeals all conflicting laws and parts of laws governing practice and procedure in civil actions, but substantive law is not repealed. At the time the supreme court files a rule, the court shall file with the secretary of state a list of each article or section of general law or each part of an article or section of general law that is repealed or modified in any way. The list has the same weight and effect as a decision of the court.”

**Note:** In 2023, a similar bill passed both chambers but was vetoed by Governor Abbott.

- [Bill Analysis](#): Senate Research Center
- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Status](#): On March 24, 2025, [State Affairs](#) conducted a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:01:00 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against SB 1719 are listed here: [Witness List](#). On March 26, the bill was unanimously voted out of committee, as amended.
- The full Senate passed SB 1719 on April 10. The bill has been forwarded to the House, referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#), and was voted out of committee, without amendments, on May 21, 2025 by a 6-5 vote.

### **SB 1794 - Interlocutory Appeals by a Political Subdivision or an Officer of Employee of a Political Subdivision**

- **Summary:** SB 1794, filed by [Sen. Mayes Middleton \(R – Galveston\)](#), would add section 51.0145 to the CPRC and require the trial court to approve an interlocutory appeal by an officer or employee of a political subdivision. Provides that the trial court may only approve a request if the appeal involves a controlling question of law, an immediate appeal may materially advance the litigation, and issuing a stay will not materially deprive the non-moving party from exercising a constitutional right.



- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes in the law would apply only to actions filed on or after the effective date.
- *Status:* Referred to [Jurisprudence](#) on March 13, 2025.

**[SB 2516 - Court Orders Eligible for an Interlocutory Appeal \(Companion: \[HB 5477\]\(#\)\)](#)**

- **Summary:** SB 2516, filed by [Sen. Paul Bettencourt \(R – Houston\)](#), would amend section 51.014 of the CPRC to eliminate an interlocutory appeal for (1) the denial of a motion for summary judgment based on an assertion of immunity by an officer or employee of the state or a political subdivision; and (2) a grant or denial of a plea to the jurisdiction by a governmental unit.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025.
- **Note:** [Rep. Mike Schofield \(R – Katy\)](#) filed the companion House bill.
- *Status of SB 2516:* Referred to [Jurisprudence](#) on April 3, 2025.
- *Status of HB 5477:* Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on April 7, 2025.

**G. Texas Citizens Participation Act**

**[HB 2988 – Award of Costs and Attorney’s Fees in Actions Involving the Exercise of Certain Constitutional Rights](#)**

- **Summary:** HB 2988, filed by [Rep. Mano DeAyala \(R – Houston\)](#), would amend CPRC and add section 27.0091, which would authorize a court to award attorney’s costs and attorney’s fees "as are equitable and just." HB 2988 would also repeal sections 27.007 (additional findings with award of sanctions) and 27.009 (mandatory attorney’s fees).
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. The changes in the law would apply only to actions filed on or after the effective date.
- *Status:* [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) conducted a hearing on the bill on April 23, 2025: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 03:49:30 mark. The bill was left pending.



**SB 336 – Automatic Stay of Proceedings During Interlocutory Appeals of Orders Denying TCPA Motions to Dismiss (Companion: HB 2459)**

- Summary: SB 336, filed by [Sen. Bryan Hughes \(R – Mineola\)](#), would amend section 51.014 of the CPRC to provide that an interlocutory appeal of the denial of a Texas Citizens Participation Act (TCPA) motion to dismiss stays commencement of the trial and other proceedings until the 61st day after the date the order denying the motion was signed if: (1) the order states that the motion was not timely filed; (2) the motion was denied because the action is exempt from the TCPA; or (3) the motion was determined to be frivolous or solely intended to delay.
- SB 336 also provides that, if the order does not state a reason for denial or provides a different reason for denial than prescribed above, filing the appeal stays commencement of trial and other proceedings pending resolution of the appeal. It also authorizes the court of appeals to stay commencement of trial and other proceedings in the trial court on a determination that the appellant is likely to succeed on the merits or in the interest of justice.
- *Effective date:* September 1, 2025. However, if SB 336 or HB 2459 are passed by a vote of two thirds of all members elected to each chamber, the changes in the law under the bills would be effective immediately. The changes in the law addressed in SB 336 and HB 2459 would apply to an order denying a motion to dismiss entered on or after the effective date.
- [Note: [Rep. Jeff Leach \(R – Allen\)](#) filed the House companion bill.]
- [Status of SB 336](#): Referred to [State Affairs](#) on February 3, 2025.
- [Status of HB 2459](#): Referred to [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) on March 17, 2025.

**H. Texas Sovereignty Act**

**HB 796 – Texas Sovereignty Act**

- **Summary:** HB 796, filed by [Rep. Cecil Bell \(R – Magnolia\)](#), would amend the Government Code and do the following:
  - Establish a 12-member Joint Legislative Committee in Constitutional Enforcement as a permanent joint committee of the Texas Legislature to review specified federal actions that challenge the state's sovereignty and

that of the people for the purpose of determining if the federal action is unconstitutional. The bill would authorize the committee to review any applicable federal action to determine whether the action is an unconstitutional federal action and establish the factors the committee is required to consider when reviewing a federal action. The bill would require the committee, no later than the 180th day after the date the committee holds its first public hearing to review a specific federal action, to vote to determine whether the action is an unconstitutional federal action and authorize the committee to make such a determination by majority vote.

- Require the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor to appoint the initial committee members no later than the 30th day following the bill's effective date and would require the Secretary of State, no later than the 30th day following the bill's effective date, to forward official copies of the bill to the President of the United States, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the U.S. Senate, and to all members of the Texas congressional delegation with the request that the bill be officially entered in the Congressional Record. The bill would require the Speaker and the Lieutenant Governor to forward official copies of the bill to the presiding officers of the legislatures of the several states no later than the 45th day following the bill's effective date.
- Require the committee to report its determination that a federal action is an unconstitutional federal action to the Texas House of Representatives and to the Texas Senate during the current legislative session if the legislature is convened when the committee makes the determination, or the next regular or special legislative session if the legislature is not convened when the committee makes the determination. The bill would require each house of the legislature to vote on whether the federal action is an unconstitutional federal action and, if a majority of the members of each house determine that the federal action is an unconstitutional federal action, would require the determination to be sent to the Governor for approval or disapproval as provided by the Texas Constitution regarding the approval or disapproval of bills. The bill would establish that a federal action is declared by the state to be an unconstitutional federal action on the day the Governor approves the vote of the legislature making the determination or on the day the determination would become law if presented to the Governor as a bill and not objected to by the Governor. The bill would also require the Secretary of State to forward official copies of the declaration to the President of the United States, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the U.S. Senate, and to all members of the Texas congressional delegation with the

request that the declaration of unconstitutional federal action be entered in the Congressional Record.

- Establish that a federal action declared to be an unconstitutional federal action under the bill's provisions regarding such a legislative determination has no legal effect in Texas and prohibit such an action from being recognized by the state or a political subdivision of the state as having legal effect. The bill's provisions regarding the enforcement of the United States Constitution expressly do not prohibit a public officer who has taken an oath to defend the United States Constitution from interposing to stop acts of the federal government which, in the officer's best understanding and judgment, violate the United States Constitution.
- Authorize the Texas Attorney General to defend the state to prevent the implementation and enforcement of a federal action declared to be an unconstitutional federal action. The bill would authorize the Attorney General to prosecute a person who attempts to implement or enforce a federal action declared to be an unconstitutional federal action and to appear before a grand jury in connection with such an offense.
- Amend the CPRC to establish that any court in Texas has original jurisdiction of a proceeding seeking a declaratory judgment that a federal action effective in Texas is an unconstitutional federal action. The bill would entitle a person to declaratory relief if the court determines that a federal action is an unconstitutional federal action and would prohibit the court, in determining whether to grant declaratory relief to the person, from relying solely on the decisions of other courts interpreting the United States Constitution. The bill would also require the court to rely on the plain meaning of the text of the United States Constitution and any applicable constitutional doctrine as understood by the framers of the Constitution.
- *Effective date:* If HB 796 passes by a vote of two-thirds of all members elected to each chamber, the changes in the law would be effective immediately. Otherwise, the changes in the law under HB 796 would become effective on September 1, 2025.
- **[Note:** [Sen. Bob Hall \(R - Edgewood\)](#) has filed a similar bill in the Senate ([SB 80](#)), with the primary difference being that the Texas Supreme Court would review any committee determination that a federal action was unconstitutional. Similar bills were filed in 2017, 2019, 2021, and 2021. In 2017, [HB 2338](#) was voted out of committee, but it never reached the House

floor. [HB 1215](#), [HB 1347](#), and [HB 384](#) were filed in 2019, 2021, and 2023 respectively, but all died in committee.]

- [Fiscal Note for HB 796](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Bill Analysis](#): Senate Research Center
- [Status of SB 80](#): Referred to [State Affairs](#) on February 3, 2025.
- [Status of HB 796](#): Referred to [State Affairs](#) on March 5, 2025. The committee conducted a hearing on the bill on March 26: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 02:41:20 mark. On April 2, 2025, the bill was originally voted out of committee by a 9-5 vote, but was sent back to committee on April 24 after a point of order was sustained. HB 796 was eventually voted out of committee (as amended) on April 25, 2025. The full House passed the bill, as amended, on May 7, 2025, and forwarded to the Senate. By an 8-2 vote, Senate [State Affairs](#) approved an amended version of the bill on May 27. Under the amended version, HB 796 simply authorizes the legislature by concurrent resolution to determine that a federal directive is an unconstitutional federal directive and prohibit a government officer or employee from enforcing or assisting in the enforcement of the unconstitutional federal directive.
- [Status of HB 898](#): Referred to [State Affairs](#) on March 6, 2025.

#### IV. LEGISLATION THAT PASSED – SPECIAL SESSION

##### [HB 16 – Operation and Administration of Practices and Procedures Relater to Judicial Branch Proceedings](#)

- **Summary:** HB 16, filed by [Rep. Jeff Leach \(R – Allen\)](#), amends various chapters of the Government Code as it relates to district courts, statutory county courts, visiting judges, the business court, jurors, and court administration. For example, the bill, among other things:
- Creates new judicial districts in Brazoria, Colorado, Comal, Ellis, Fort Bend, Harris, Lavaca, Rockwall, and Williamson Counties; expand or alter the concurrent jurisdiction of the Atascosa County Court at Law, the Bowie County Court at Law, the Hidalgo County Courts at Law, the Potter County Courts at Law, and the Tom Green County Court at Law; designate preferences for certain courts in Henderson and Tarrant Counties; and eliminate the eminent domain jurisdiction of a statutory probate court in Montgomery County.

- Increases the maximum amount-in-controversy for certain county courts at law from \$250,000 to \$325,000.
- Authorizes the presiding judge of the statutory probate courts to assign a former or retired justice of an appellate court to hear certain cases and would permit a former or retired justice of an appellate court to be assigned by the presiding judge to hold court.
- Requires the district clerk to prepare a list of certain persons disqualified from serving as a grand juror and send a copy of the list to certain officials.
- Revises the qualifications to be a juror and the requirements for documenting and transmitting names of persons ineligible to be jurors. It also provides that certain courts may appoint a spoken language interpreter who is not a certified or licensed court interpreter under certain conditions.
- Prohibits a party from filing a notice of appeal in a civil case requesting assignment of the appeal to the Fifteenth Court of Appeals unless the notice includes a matter arising out of or related to the case that is within the court's exclusive intermediate appellate jurisdiction.
- Requires the clerk of the Texas Supreme Court (SCOTX) to provide, rather than mail, copies of rules of judicial administration or amendments that are required to be sent to registered members of the State Bar and members of the Legislature. Amends certain procedures for contesting constitutional amendment elections.
- Amends judicial education requirements to include elder abuse and neglect but exempts judges or judicial officers who do not hear cases involving family violence, sexual assault, trafficking of persons, or child abuse and neglect.
- Adds Bastrop County to the Business Court's Third Division (Austin).
- Modifies the summary judgment procedures created by the 89th Legislature in SB 293 and, effective December 4, 2025, requires trial courts to hear summary judgment motions (via oral argument or written submission) no later than: (1) 60 days after the motion is filed, or (2) 90 days after the motion is filed (a) if the court's docket requires a hearing on a date later than the 60th day after the motion is filed, (b) on a showing of good cause, or (c) if the movant consents. As provided in SB 293, the trial court must issue a written ruling no later than 90 days after submission or argument.
- Amends the Government Code to provide that all laws and parts of laws governing practice and procedure in civil actions enacted before May 15, 1939, are repealed,

except that no laws or parts of laws are superseded until SCOTX adopts a rule that governs the subject matter of the law or part of a law; however, no substantive laws are repealed.

- Creates places for two additional justices on the Fifteenth Court of Appeals, one of which will be filled during the fourth year following the court's creation (2028) and the other will be filled during the fifth year following the court's creation (2029).
- *Effective date:* Except as otherwise provided in the bill (primarily court-creation dates), the changes in the law under HB 16 become effective on December 4, 2025, which is the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.
- [Bill Analysis](#): House Research Organization
- [Fiscal Note](#): Legislative Budget Board
- [Status](#): On August 20, 2025, [Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence](#) held a hearing on the bill: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:00:25 mark. Witnesses who registered a position or testified in favor of, on, or against HB 16 are listed here: [Witness List](#). The committee unanimously voted the bill, as amended, out of committee. On August 25, by a vote of 130-1, the full House passed HB 16, as amended.
- On August 26, 2025, the bill was forwarded to the Senate where [State Affairs](#) immediately conducted a hearing: [Notice](#). Those who are interested can watch the proceedings [here](#). Testimony begins around the 00:33:20 mark. The bill was unanimously voted out of committee, without any amendments, and then unanimously passed by the full Senate that same day.

The remaining bills that passed during the second special session (along with hyperlinks to the text and a bill analysis for each bill) are listed below. [**Note:** Bills marked with an asterisk (i.e., HB 7, SB 8, and HB 18) include provisions designating the Fifteenth Court of Appeals as the intermediate appellate court with exclusive jurisdiction over cases and actions arising out of the laws enacted under each bill.]

- Youth Camp Emergency Plans and Preparedness: [HB 1](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Campground and Youth Camp Safety: [SB 1](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Outdoor Warning Sirens in Flash Flood-Prone Areas: [SB 3](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Composition of Congressional Districts: [HB 4](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)

- Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief and Preparedness: [SB 5](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Prohibitions on the Manufacture and Provision of Abortion-Inducing Drugs: [HB 7\\*](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Replacement of STAAR Test with a TEA-Developed or Approved Assessments: [HB 8](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Designation and Use of Spaces and Facilities According to Sex: [SB 8\\*](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Affirmative Defenses to Prosecution for Victims of Trafficking or Compelling Prostitution: [SB 11](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Duty of the Attorney General to Prosecute Criminal Offenses Prescribed by State Election Laws: [SB 12](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Provision of Credits by Political Subdivision Against Impact Fees to Builders and Developers for Water Conservation and Reuse Projects: [SB 14](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Real Property Theft and Real Property Fraud; Establishing Recording Requirements for Certain Documents Concerning Real Property: [SB 16](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Restrictions on Acceptance of Political Contributions and Making Political Expenditures by Legislators and Certain Political Committees When Legislators are Absent from a Legislative Session: [HB 18\\*](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Measures to Prevent and Reduce Fraudulent Charitable Solicitations and Theft During Declared Disasters: [HB 20](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Exemption from Ad Valorem Property Taxes by Certain Nonprofit Corporations: [HB 23](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Pharmacist's Authority to Dispense Ivermectin Without a Prescription: [HB 25](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Contracting with Law Enforcement Agencies in Certain Counties: [HB 26](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)
- Election Procedures Regarding Acceptance of a Voter with a Non-Current Residence Address: [SB 54](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)

- Elections Related to Funding of Law Enforcement Agencies in Certain Counties: [HB 192](#) and [Bill Analysis](#)