

Legislative Update

88th Texas Legislature

Louis Tomasetti
Director of Government Relations
Office of Court Administration
June 30, 2023



Session Statistics

	86 th Legislative Session	87 th Legislative Session	88 th Legislative Session
Bills Filed	7,324	6,930	8,046
Sent to Governor	1,211	1,073	1,246
Vetoes	58	21	77



Criminal Justice Committee Recommendations

JUDICIAL WORK PRODUCT SECURITY - PASSED

SB 372 – Sen. Huffman / Rep. Leach

- Created a class A misdemeanor for public distribution of draft judicial opinions or work product

YOUTH CLASS C DIVERSION - PASSED

HB 3186 – Rep. Leach / Sen. Zaffirini

- Allows youth charged with Class C fine-only offenses to be handled similarly to the way more serious offenses are handled
- Provides diversion opportunities
 - Examples include participating in alcohol awareness programs, tobacco awareness programs and jobs skills training
- More than **39,600** non-traffic Class C fine-only offenses filed against juveniles in FY22

BAIL – DID NOT PASS

SJR 44 - Sen. Huffman

- Constitutional amendment to implement preventative detention



Public Trust and Confidence Committee Recommendations

CLEAN SLATE – DID NOT PASS

HB 1737 – Rep. Leach / Sen. Zaffirini

- Automate the record sealing process for people with first-time, non-violent misdemeanors

CIVICS EDUCATION – DID NOT PASS

SB 1954 – Sen. Zaffirini

- Increases civic training requirements for social studies teachers and curriculum requirements for students



Civil Justice Committee Recommendations

FAMILY REPRESENTATION IN CHILD PROTECTION - PASSED

SB 2120 – Sen. Zaffirini / Rep. Cook

- After the 86th Texas Legislative passed SB 560, TJC directed TIDC to begin data collection on court-appointment systems in child protection cases.
- TJC recommended the creation of a Family Protection Legal Representation Program within TIDC.



Criminal & Civil Justice Committee Recommendations

JUVENILE NICS REPORTING - PASSED

SB 728 – Sen. Huffman / Rep. Leach

- Clarifies clerk reporting of cases to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) for juveniles who meet the definition of a “federal prohibited person” for purchase / possession of a firearm related to MH or ID in certain circumstances.



TJC Committee Recommendations

MENTAL HEALTH - PASSED

SB 2479 – Sen. Zaffirini / Rep. Moody

- The Committee recommended additional reforms to the ways courts and the criminal justice system interact with individuals with mental health conditions or an intellectual developmental disability.
- 16 topic areas in the initial bill, but 5 in passed legislation

JUDICIAL COMPENSATION – DID NOT PASS

HB 2779 - Rep. Leach

- Would have raised the base pay of a District Court Judge 11% in FY 24 and another 11% in FY 25.



TJC Committee Recommendations

CASE LEVEL DATA - PASSED

HB 1 - General Appropriations Bill

- Provided \$6 million in funding to OCA over the biennium for a system to capture case level data

HB 841 - Coauthored: Rep. Ordaz, Rep. Moody, Rep. Leach / Sen. Middleton

- Requires TJC to collect case level data

HB 1182 - Rep. Harless / Sen. Whitmire

- Requires TJC to collect case level data, certain specific data elements in counties over 1 million in population



Bills of Interest

HB 19 – Rep. Murr / Sen. Hughes

- Business Courts

HB 367 – Rep. Jetton / Sen. Zaffirini

- Authorizes the State Commission on Judicial Conduct to take actions with respect to judicial candidates.

HB 2384 – Rep. Leach / Sen. Hughes

- Changes to court administration, training, and transparency requirements for judicial candidates and office holders

HB 3474 – Rep. Leach / Sen. Hughes

- Court omnibus bill



Bills of Interest

SB 380 – Sen. Zaffirini / Rep. Moody

- Repayment of interpreter court costs

SB 775 / HB 4381 – Sen. Zaffirini / Rep. Leach

- Modernization of wage garnishment in Texas
- Did not pass

SB 1045 – Sen. Huffman / Rep. Murr

- 15th Court of Appeals



Judiciary Budget Highlights

- 5% salary increase in FY24 & FY25 for state employees
- \$350k and 2 FTE for Specialty Court
- \$308k and 2 FTE for Court Security
- \$6 million to support case level data
- \$4.3 million to provide software licenses to the judiciary and refresh the aging network
- \$460k and 1 FTE to transfer IT support for Title IV-D Associate Judges from AG to OCA



OCA Project Highlights

SB 48 – Sen. Zaffirini / Rep. Leach

- Protective Order form standardization
- Study on the effectiveness of Protective Orders

Workload Analysis of Trial Court Personnel

- Study using the weighted caseload analysis of court personnel
- \$200k

HB 4293 – Rep. Hinojosa / Sen. Zaffirini

- OCA develop a court reminder program that would send a text message to notify criminal defendants of scheduled court appearances
- \$2.2 million

