

Legislative Update

89th Texas Legislature

Megan LaVoie & Louis Tomasetti

Office of Court Administration

June 13, 2025

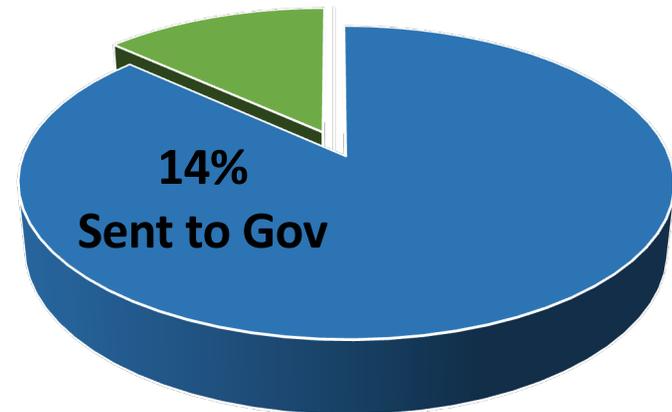
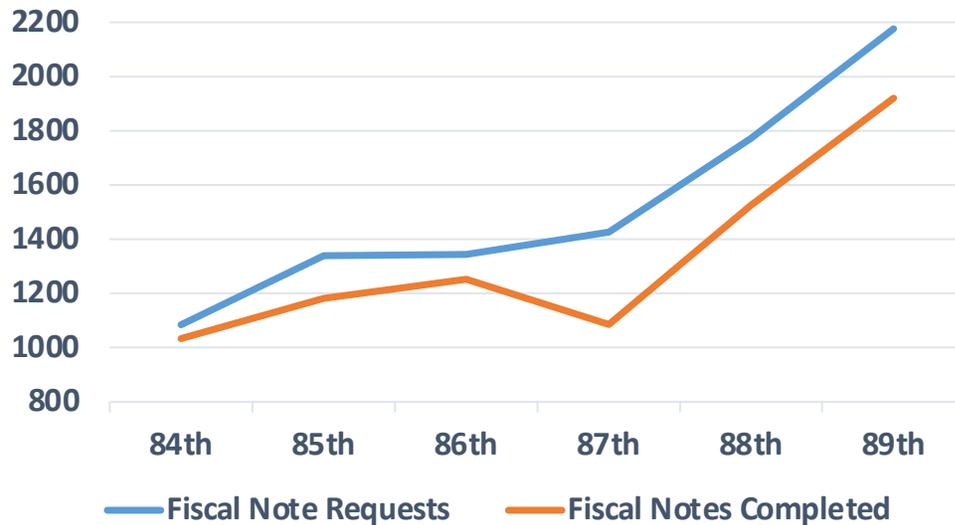
OFFICE *of* COURT ADMINISTRATION



Session Statistics

Chamber	86 th Legislative Session	87 th Legislative Session	88 th Legislative Session	89 th Legislative Session
House	4,765	4,671	5,413	5,644
Senate	2,559	2,259	2,633	3,075
Total	7,324	6,930	8,046	8,719

Fiscal Notes





Judicial Compensation & Accountability

SB 293 (Sen. Huffman/Rep. Leach) – Passed

- 25% Increase to base pay of a District Judge
- Requires District Judges to account for certain time and tasks, SCOTX to adopt rules, OCA to develop system to report time
- Includes many Judicial Conduct Commission reforms

SJR 27 (Sen. Huffman/Rep. Leach) – To Voters

- Modifies the composition of Judicial Conduct Commission to include 6 Judges or Justices (2 must be trial court judges) appointed by the Supreme Court and 7 Gubernatorial appointees
- Modifies the Constitution to allow a tribunal to suspend a judicial officer without pay for a specific period

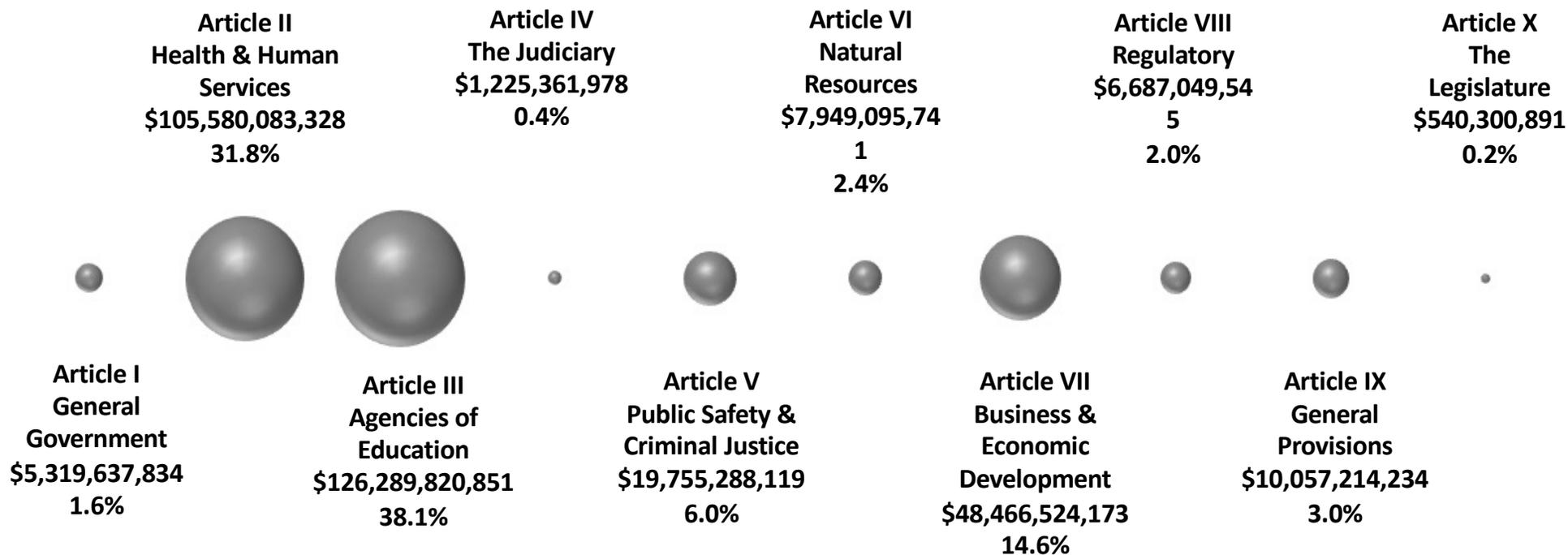


District Judge Salary

Years of Service	State Salary	State Longevity Pay	Maximum County Supplement	Total Maximum Compensation
0-4 Years (Base)	\$175,000	\$0	\$25,000	\$200,000
4-8 Years	\$192,500	\$0	\$25,000	\$217,500
8+ Years	\$210,000	\$0	\$25,000	\$235,000
12+ Years (Longevity)	\$210,000	\$10,500	\$25,000	\$245,500



FY 26 / 27 Appropriation by Article



Total Budget = \$331,870,376,694



Judiciary Budget Highlights

SB 1 (Sen. Huffman / Rep. Bonnen) – Passed

HB 500 (Rep Bonnen / Sen. Huffman) – Passed

Salary Increases

- 25% Judicial Officer pay increase - \$105 million
- 6% salary increase in FY26 for judiciary employees
- An additional 6% for Attorney, General Counsel, & Law Clerk series
- An additional 15% salary increase for court coordinators

Technology

- Replacement of Texas Appellate Case Management System (TAMES) = \$12 million
- Creation of a Specialty Court Case Management System - \$4 million
- New Case Management Systems for SCJC and CPA-J
- SB 9-Expansion of Public Safety Reporting System with county integration of case management systems - \$6.1 million



Judiciary Budget Highlights

Personnel

- 53 additional FTEs, including Attorneys, Paralegals, Mitigation Specialists, Librarian, Administrative Support and a Specialty Court Director
- 11 Regional Data Coordinators
- 3 FTEs to Expand Remote Court Interpreter Program
- Staff scientist position for the Forensic Science Commission and training funds

Other Budgetary Impacts

- Revenue shortfall restoration and funding for expanded public defense offices – TIDC \$19 million



Judiciary Budget Highlights

- Buildout of a courtroom for the 15th COA
- Forensic Analyst Apprenticeship Program - \$4.8 Million
- Appropriation of Business Court Filing Fees to reimburse counties for jury empaneling
- Expansion of Local Mental Health Court Liaison Pilot Program in the Supreme Court - \$1.5 million
- Inflationary Adjustment for Judicial Education in the Court of Criminal Appeals - \$400K
- Travel reimbursement funding for SCOTX and CCA
- Judiciary appropriations are .36% of the State budget and increased 11% from 24-25 levels.



Judicial Council Changes

SB 2878 (Sen. Hughes/Rep. Leach) - Passed

- GC 71.0354 requires prosecutors to report to Judicial Council beginning September 1, 2026
 - Categories of criminal offenses prosecuted and number of cases in each category
 - Number of personnel employed, and its sufficiency based on caseload
 - Number of defendants released pursuant to CCP 17.151
 - Number of electronic notices made under 17.027(a)(2)

HB 40 (Rep. Landgraf / Sen. Hughes) – Passed

- The Administrative Presiding Judge of the Business Court is a member of Council



Council Resolutions

BAIL

SJR 5 (Sen. Huffman/Rep. Smithee) – To Voters

- Constitutional amendment to implement preventative detention

SB 9 (Sen. Huffman/Rep. Smithee) - Signed

- Changes to PSRS, bail appeals

JUDICIAL PROFESSION SHORTAGES

SB 2878 (Sen. Hughes/Rep. Leach) - Passed

- OCA shall conduct a study on Digital Court Recording including the cost, access, accuracy, and effectiveness
- SB 1538 (Sen Zaffirini)



Council Resolutions

JUDICIAL SECURITY & DISASTER PLANNING

HB 5081 (Rep. Leach/Sen. Creighton & Sen. Zaffirini) - Passed

- Creates a class B misdemeanor for publicly posting certain personally identifiable information (PII) of judges or court personnel

SB 2878 (Sen. Hughes/Rep. Leach) - Passed

- Enhances the punishment for harassment of a state judge
- Makes changes to Court Security Committees
- SB 1575 (Sen. Zaffirini) / HB 4502 (Rep. Smithee)



Council Resolutions

ASSOCIATE JUDGES

SB 2878 (Sen. Hughes/Rep. Leach) - **Passed**

- SB 1576 (Sen. Zaffirini) / HB 5079 (Rep. Leach)
 - Minimum qualifications of a magistrate or associate judge appointed under Government Code Chapter 54 or 54A by increasing their years of experience as a licensed attorney
- SB 664 (Sen. Huffman / Rep. Cook) - **Signed**

COURT EFFICIENCY

SB 2878 (Sen. Hughes/Rep. Leach) - **Passed**

- SB 2070 (Sen. Zaffirini) / HB 5128 (Rep. Leach)
 - Requires OCA to organize a leadership conference and increased the compensation paid to a Local Administrative District Judge
- SB 1996 (Sen. Zaffirini) / HB 5078 (Rep. Leach)
 - Raised the amount in controversy ceiling for statutory county courts to \$325,000



Council Resolutions

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

SB 1574 (Sen. Zaffirini/Rep. Leach) - **Passed**

- The Centers of Excellence program was codified to recognize judges who excel in serving their communities and in representing the judiciary

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH

SB 1164 (Sen. Zaffirini / Rep. Moody) – **Passed**

- Four mental health recommendations relating to civil justice



What Didn't Pass?

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH

SB 2213 (Sen. Zaffirini) / HB 5465 (Rep. Moody)

- Nine mental health recommendations relating to criminal justice

SUPPORTING COURT PERSONNEL

SB 2364 (Sen. Zaffirini)

- Established a grant fund for counties to provide funds for salary assistance and retention incentives for judicial and court personnel

CHILDREN'S COMMISSION

SB 2014 (Sen. Zaffirini)

- Seven recommendations relating to the Family Code



What Didn't Pass?

CIVICS EDUCATION

SB 821 (Sen. Zaffirini) / HB 5077 (Rep. Leach)

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

ACCESS TO COURTS

SB 2341 (Sen. Zaffirini) / HB 4944 (Rep. Moody)

- Established a grant for counties to remove transportation cost barriers for indigent court participants

SB 2111 (Sen. Zaffirini) / HB 4915 (Rep. Moody)

- Established a loan repayment program for attorneys serving the indigent



Bills of Interest

HB 40 (Rep. Landgraf / Sen. Hughes) – Passed

- Amount in controversy thresholds decreased from \$10M to \$5M
- Montgomery County moved into the 11th Division

SB 2111 (Sen. Zaffirini / Rep. Moody) – Passed

- “TIDC Omnibus” included changes to magistration procedures, Managed Assigned Council (MAC) program, and county reimbursement and appointment procedures for indigent defendants

SB 2878 (Sen. Hughes / Rep. Leach) – Passed

- 13 District Courts, 1 County Court at Law, 1 Probate Court
- 2 Justices to the 15 Court of Appeals (1 in 2028, 1 in 2029)

