

STATE OF TEXAS

RESOLUTION

of the

TEXAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Ensuring Adequate Court Funding

WHEREAS, the Texas Judicial Council is the policymaking body for the Texas Judicial Branch, created under Chapter 71, Texas Government Code; and

WHEREAS, the Council is charged with improving the administration of justice; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Constitution divides the powers of the government of the State of Texas into three distinct departments — the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Departments; and

WHEREAS, the Judiciary, having neither the “sword nor the purse,”¹ relies upon the legislative and executive branches to provide sufficient funding to carry out its constitutional and statutory purposes; and

WHEREAS, a strong judiciary able to uphold the rule of law is critical to attracting business growth and maintaining a prosperous state; and

WHEREAS, delayed justice costs Texas businesses and citizens money, while effective and efficient courts save taxpayers money; and

WHEREAS, the total state appropriations to the Judiciary represented 0.38% of the total state budget in the 2020-21 biennium; and

WHEREAS, the Judiciary has used technology and other administrative measures to increase efficiency and make significant technological improvements; and

WHEREAS, ensuring that an adequate level of funding is provided to the Judiciary is essential to promoting access to the courts for Texans to resolve their disputes and protect the citizenry from abuse of their individual rights; and

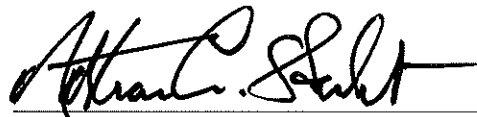
WHEREAS, the Judiciary must continue to utilize funding to improve the way it

¹ Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist #78*, THE FEDERALIST (New York: Fine Creative Media).

administers justice to better meet the needs of citizens and employers in Texas through innovation, education and technological advances;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Texas Judicial Council urges the Legislature and County Commissioners Courts to provide adequate funding to:

1. Support and restore core services to the judicial branch, as outlined in the legislative appropriations requests for the state-funded courts and judicial branch agencies;
2. Provide additional funding to assist the courts in reducing their caseload backlog resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic;
3. Increase the state base pay of the state's justices and judges as recommended by the Judicial Compensation Commission;
4. Provide sufficient judicial education to the over 3,300 judges of this state;
5. Ensure access to justice is available to individuals seeking justice through continued funding for basic civil legal services and increased funding for basic civil legal services for veterans and their families; and
6. Ensure appropriate constitutional protection through criminal indigent defense services.



Honorable Nathan L. Hecht
Chair, Texas Judicial Council