

SUPREME COURT

ANALYSIS OF ACTIVITY FOR YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 1996

The Supreme Court of Texas is the highest state court for civil appeals and promulgates rules of administration and civil procedure for the courts of Texas. It is comprised of the Chief Justice and eight justices.

The Court disposed of or otherwise acted upon a total of 3,181 matters during fiscal year 1996, a increase of 5.2 percent from the 3,025 matters passed on in fiscal year 1995.

REGULAR CAUSES

Regular Causes are regular appeals or original actions pending before the court. Normally, they reach this status when a Writ of Error is granted in the cause. Petitions for Original Mandamus and Habeas Corpus, which are not disposed of upon initial review, and in which the petition is granted, may also become regular causes.

The 152 regular causes added to the Court's docket during the year ended August 31, 1996, were 14 percent more than the 133 regular causes added in fiscal year 1995.

The 142 regular causes disposed of were 11.3 percent less than the 160 disposed of in fiscal year 1995 and 9 percent less than the 10-year average of 156. Of the regular causes disposed of during 1996, 114 came to the Court on applications for writs of error from the 14 Courts of Appeals. Of those 114 dispositions, the lower courts were reversed in whole or in part in 93 causes, or 81.6 percent. This compares to 72.7 percent reversals in fiscal year 1995.

The 52 regular causes (including motions for rehearing) left pending at the end of fiscal year 1996 represented 26.9 percent of the total number of regular causes added during the year or carried over from the previous year. This is 12 causes less than the 10-year average of 64 pending causes. At the end of fiscal year 1995, 41 regular causes had been pending in the Court.

APPLICATIONS FOR WRITS OF ERROR

An Application for Writ of Error is a request filed by one of the parties, requesting the Supreme Court to review the judgment of a Court of Appeals. If four or more of the nine justices concur the writ is granted and the cause is scheduled for argument before the court.

The 989 applications for writs of error filed during fiscal year 1996 represented a 3.1 percent decrease from the 1,021 applications filed in fiscal year 1995, and was 1.6 percent lower than the 10-year average of 1,005.

The 1,011 applications for writs of error disposed of

during the year were 1.4 percent more than the 997 disposed of during fiscal year 1995, and 1.1 percent less than the 10-year average of 1,022. Of the 1,011 applications disposed of, 150 (or 14.8 percent) were granted.

The 337 applications for writs of error left pending at the end of fiscal year 1996 represented 25 percent of the total number of such applications filed during the year or carried over from the previous year. This is 8 less pending applications than the 10-year average of 345 pending applications. At the end of fiscal year 1995, 353 applications for writs of error had been pending in the Court.

OTHER WRITS AND MOTIONS

The 2,004 other writs and motions filed during fiscal year 1996 were 3.5 percent more than the 1,936 filed during fiscal year 1995. This is 13.5 percent more than the 10-year average of 1,705 other writs and motions filed.

The 2,028 other writs and motions disposed of during fiscal year 1996 were 5.8 percent more than the 1,917 disposed during fiscal year 1995. This is 346 more dispositions than the 10-year average of 1,682 dispositions.

The 196 other writs and motions left pending by the Court at the end of fiscal year 1996 represented 9.8 percent of the total number of other writs and motions filed during the year. At the end of fiscal year 1995, 227 other writs and motions had been pending in the Court.

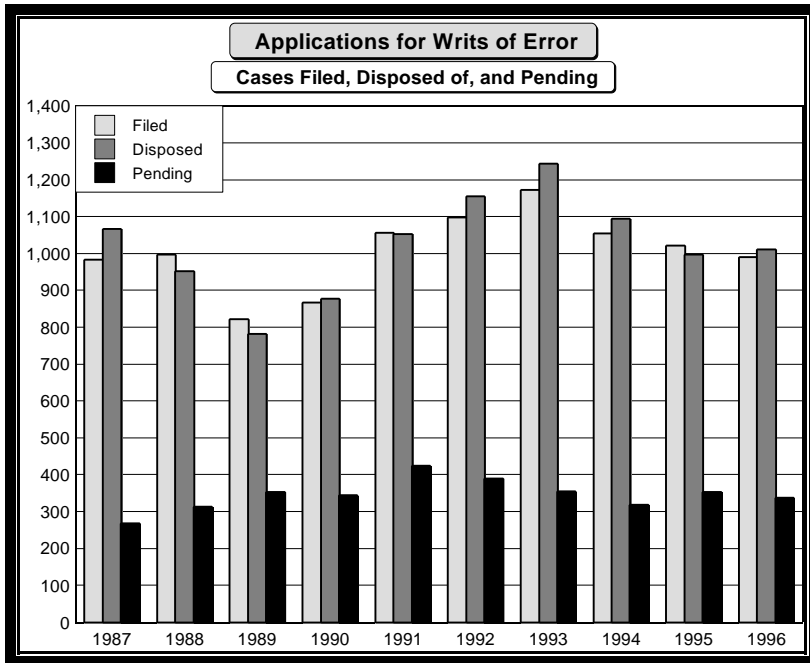
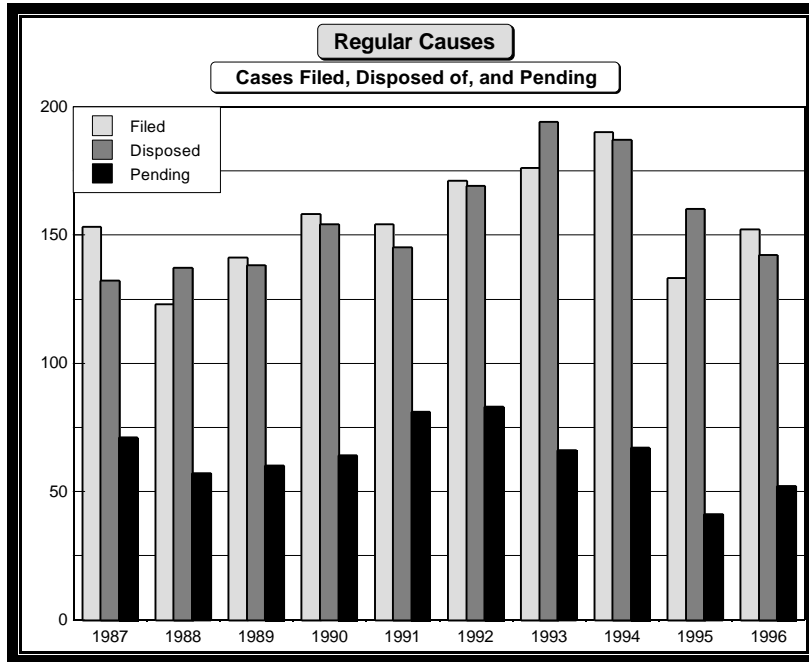
OPINIONS WRITTEN

During fiscal year 1996, the justices of the Supreme Court wrote 183 opinions (or an average of 20.3 opinions each), 18.3 percent less than the 224 opinions written in fiscal year 1995 and 14.9 percent less than the 10-year average of 215. Of the opinions written in 1996, 134 (or 73.2 percent) were deciding opinions which disposed of causes.

During fiscal year 1996, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments of 79 causes and considered an additional 17 causes submitted on briefs.

SUPREME COURT ANALYSIS OF ACTIVITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 1996
(CONTINUED)

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