

Analysis Of Activity For Year Ended August 31, 2000

Overview

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.

In fiscal year 2000, the Court disposed, or otherwise acted upon, a grand total of 3,190 matters, an increase of 4 percent from the 3,064 matters passed on in fiscal year 1999.

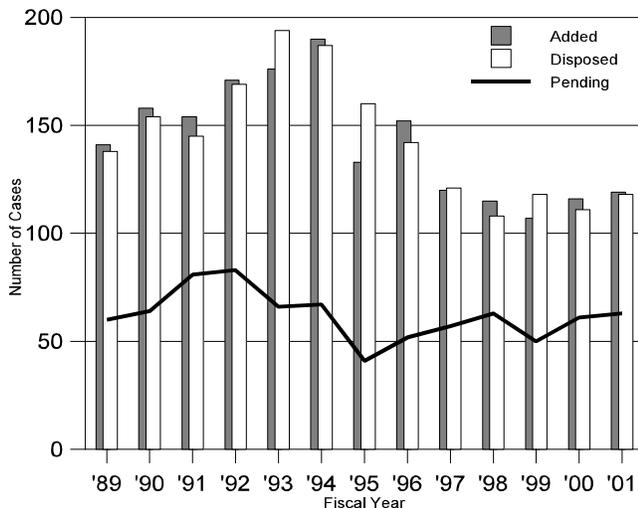
Regular Causes

Regular causes are regular appeals or original actions pending before the court. Normally, they reach this status when a Petition for Review (formerly 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. Figure 1 details the trend over the last ten years for activity regarding regular causes.

The 116 regular causes added to the Court's docket during the year ended August 31, 2000, was 8 percent more than the 107 regular causes added in fiscal year 1999, and 21 percent less than the 10-year average of 147 regular causes per year.

As for the causes disposed during the fiscal

Figure 1: Regular Causes



HIGHLIGHTS

- The Supreme Court disposed, or otherwise acted upon, a total of 3,190 matters during fiscal year 2000.
- The Supreme Court disposed of 1,063 Petitions during the year, 7 percent more than in fiscal year 1999.
- Of the 1,063 applications reviewed 97, or 11 percent of them were granted. The rest were denied, dismissed, abated, struck, or withdrawn.
- The 2,011 other writs and motions disposed of in fiscal year 2000 was 4 percent more than the 1,940 disposed during fiscal year 1999.
- During fiscal year 2000, the justices of the Supreme Court wrote 180 opinions (an average of 20 opinions per judge), 9 percent more than the 165 opinions written in fiscal year 1999.

year, the 111 regular causes disposed was 6 percent less than the 118 causes disposed of in fiscal year 1999, and 24 percent less than the 10-year average of 146. Of the regular causes disposed during 2000, 90 came to the court on applications for Petitions for Review from the fourteen Courts of Appeals. Of those dispositions, the lower courts were reversed in whole or in part in 61 causes, or 68 percent of the time; compared to a 64 percent reversal rate in fiscal year 1999.

The 61 regular causes (not including motions for rehearing) left pending represented 35 percent of the total number of regular causes added during the year or carried over from the previous year. This was approximately the same as the 10-year average of 62 pending causes. At the end of fiscal year 1999, 56 regular causes were pending in the Court.

Petitions for Review

A Petition for Review (formerly a Writ of Error) is a request filed by one of the parties for the Supreme Court to review the judgment of a Court of

Analysis of Activity for the Year Ended August 31, 2000

(Continued)

Appeals. If four or more of the nine justices concur, the petition is granted and the cause is scheduled for argument before the court. Figure 2 below details the trend over the last ten years for Petitions for Review and Applications for Writs of Error.

The 1,069 Petitions for Review filed in fiscal year 2000 was 6 percent more than the number of Petitions for Review filed in fiscal year 1999, and 4 percent more than the average number filed in the last 10 fiscal years.

In regards to disposed applications, the 1,063 Petitions for Review disposed of during the year was 7 percent more than the 991 applications disposed during fiscal year 1999, and 2 percent more than the 10-year

Other Writs And Motions

There were 1,997 other writs and motions filed from September 1, 1999 to August 31, 2000. This category refers to all other applications filed involving cases related to mandamus-civil, habeas corpus, writs of prohibition and injunction, direct appeals, U.S. certified questions, petitions for certiorari, petitions to publish, petitions for temporary injunctions, disciplinary appeals, miscellaneous procedures, and motions for rehearing. The number of other writs and motions filed in fiscal year 2000 was 5 percent more than the 1,911 filed during fiscal year 1999, and 5 percent more than the 10-year average of 1,830.

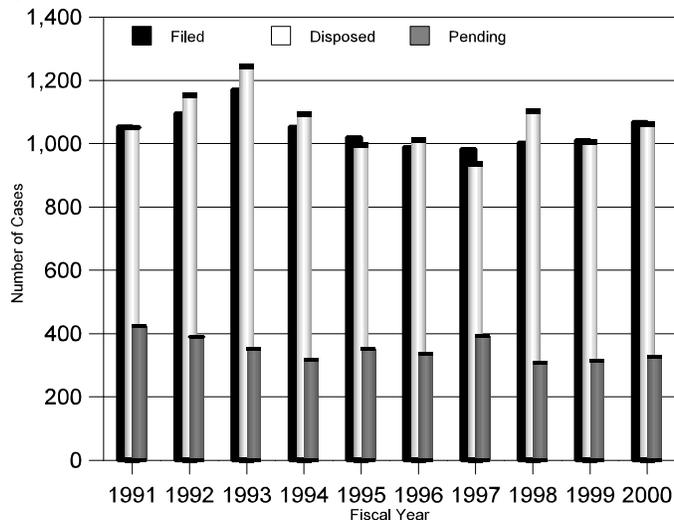
The 2,011 other writs and motions disposed of during fiscal year 2000 was 4 percent more than the 1,940 disposed during fiscal year 1999. This was 11 percent more dispositions than the 10-year average of 1,818 dispositions.

The 137 other writs and motions left pending by the Court at the end of fiscal year 2000 represented 7 percent of the total number of other writs and motions filed during the year. At the end of fiscal year 1999, 170 other writs and motions had been pending in the Court.

Opinions Written

During fiscal year 2000, the justices of the Supreme Court wrote 180 opinions (an average of 20 opinions per justice). This was 9 percent more than the 165 opinions written in fiscal year 1999, but 14 percent less than the 10-year average of 208. Ninety-nine, or approximately 55 percent of the opinions in 2000 were deciding opinions. Of the remaining 81 opinions, 47 were dissenting, 29 were concurring, 5 were concurring and dissenting.

Figure 2: Petitions for Review / Applications for Writ of Error



average of 1,049. Of the 1,063 applications reviewed 97, or 11 percent of them were granted. The rest were denied, dismissed, abated, struck, withdrawn, or an opinion was issued.

The 328 Petitions for Review left pending at the end of fiscal year 2000 represented 24 percent of the total docket of petitions filed and pending for the year, and was 6 percent less than the 10-year average of 350. There were 313 Petitions for Review that were pending in the Court at the end of fiscal year 1999.