

# Texas Judicial Council Legislative Update

At its November 2014 meeting, the Texas Judicial Council approved thirteen resolutions urging the Legislature to take action on certain issues. Those resolutions and the legislative outcome are listed below:

Council Resolution	Bill Filed	Author/Sponsor	Status	Impact on Resolution
Ensuring Adequate Court Funding	SB1/HB 1	Nelson/Otto	Filed/Referred to committees	The introduced versions maintained baseline spending for most courts and judicial agencies but did not contain most of the exceptional items requested by those entities.
Adequate Funding of the Court eFiling System				OCA's legislative appropriations requests seeks \$6.5 million in funding for current biennium contract costs, \$2 million for contract costs for FY16 and \$2 million in grant funding for counties. None of these requests were included in the introduced version of the budget.
Additional State Funding for Indigent Defense				TIDC requested \$6.2 million to support the Regional Public Defender for Capital Cases, \$3 million to support a multi-county indigent defense technology grant program, and \$196.8 million for increased funding to counties for indigent defense. None of these requests were included in the introduced version of the budget.
Judicial Compensation Commission Recommendations				Recommendations include a 5% increase in compensation for state-funded judicial salaries, that the legislature make regular adjustments to judicial salaries, that the Commissions salary recommendations be listed in the introduced version of the General Appropriations Act and that the salary of the state-funded associate judges be increased to 90% of a district judge's state salary. None of these requests were included in the introduced version of the budget. The bill for statutory change has not been filed.
Assessment of Court Costs in Multiple-Count Criminal Actions				This bill would establish that court costs be assessed only once in multi-count criminal actions. This bill has not been filed.
Decriminalizing Failure to Attend School	HB93, HB297, HB378, HB1490,	White Wu White Huberty	Filed/Referred to committees	The Council's resolution encourages the Legislature to decriminalize failure to attend school while leaving intact the offense of truancy, relax statutory provisions that require schools to refer children to the courts, ensure schools have

	SB106, SB285	Whitmire West		adequate resources and incentives, and equip justice and municipal courts have adequate resources to provide prevention and intervention services to referred children.
Elders Committee Recommendations				The Council's resolution encourages adoption of the Elders Committee recommendations. This bill has not been filed.
Eligibility for Specialty Courts	SB417	West	Filed/Referred to Committee	The Council's recommendation removes the prohibition for admitting violent offenders to drug courts and DWI courts, subject to certain provisions to protect the public and serve the public interest.
Revisions of Statutes to Contemplate Court Technology				The Council's recommendations include revising the statutes to provide courts and clerks with the option of utilizing technology to deliver notices and other information to court users. This bill has not been filed.
Supporting Funding for Civil Legal Aid in Texas				The Council's recommendation supports the Supreme Court's request for additional funding for basic civil legal services. The requests were not included in the introduced version of the budget.
Supporting Grant Funding for Legal Services for Veterans				The Council's recommendation supports the Supreme Court's request for additional funding for basic civil legal services. The requests were not included in the introduced version of the budget.
Supporting Texas Family Code Amendments related to case transfers in CPS cases				The Council's recommendation supports the Childrens Commission's recommendation that CPS cases be transferred by the clerk within ten days of the order transferring the case. This bill has not been filed.
Supporting Texas Family Code Amendments related to indigent parents involved in child protection services cases				The Council's recommendation supports the Childrens Commission's recommendations regarding appointment of counsel in CPS cases. This bill has not been filed.
Supporting Texas Family Code Amendments related to indigent parents involved in child protection services cases (Managed Assigned Counsel and Regional Public Defender Programs)				The Council's recommendation supports the Childrens Commission's recommendations establishment of regional public defender and managed assigned counsel programs for CPS attorney appointments. This bill has not been filed.