



COMMISSIONERS COURT COMMUNICATION

REFERENCE NUMBER _____

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DATE: 02/21/2023

**SUBJECT: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING TARRANT
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT LEGISLATIVE POLICY
STATEMENTS FOR THE 88TH SESSION OF THE TEXAS
LEGISLATURE**

COMMISSIONERS COURT ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the Commissioners Court discuss and possibly take action regarding a legislative policy statement requested by Criminal Courts Administration.

BACKGROUND

On February 7, 2023, the Commissioners Court, through Court Order #140197, approved its initial legislative policies for the 88th Session of the Texas Legislature.

Criminal Courts Administration has requested Commissioners Court support for legislation that will create efficiencies in the criminal court system. The request was signed by all effected judges. The proposed legislation includes

- Ensure that the district courts in Tarrant County giving preference to criminal cases have uniform enabling statutes. Some did not have concurrent original jurisdiction over misdemeanor cases
- Make the Tarrant County criminal district courts' jurisdiction and powers uniform
- Amend enabling statutes for the statutory county criminal courts in Tarrant County to reflect current practices and caseloads in those courts. Adds a provision giving the statutory county criminal courts concurrent jurisdiction over all felonies except for capital murder to assist with heavy felony caseloads in the Tarrant County courts
- Clarify that the Tarrant County criminal law magistrates cannot practice law in Tarrant County after they are appointed
- Codify a standing administrative order that requires the Tarrant County District Clerk to be the clerk of the magistrate court
- Clarify that the Tarrant County criminal court administrator may also serve the Tarrant County criminal district courts
- Expressly allow a defendant to waive the on-the-record inquiry in Article 42.15(a-1), Code of Criminal Procedure.

The suggested language would be SUPPORT legislation that creates efficiencies for the Tarrant County District Courts Giving Preference to Criminal Cases, Tarrant County Criminal District Courts, and Tarrant County Criminal Courts at Law.

SUBMITTED BY:	Administrator's Office	PREPARED BY: APPROVED BY:	Russell Schaffner
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FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.