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Senator Joan Huffman

Senate District 17

Senator Joan Huffman Files Senate Bill 1045 to Create a New Intermediate Appellate Court

AUSTIN — Today, Senator Joan Huffman filed Senate Bill 1045, which if passed into law would create the 15th Court of Appeals as part of the state’s intermediate appellate court system. The court will be located in Austin and have statewide jurisdiction of civil cases brought by or against the State of Texas.

“Local cases deserve to be heard by local judges, but cases with statewide implications—like those involving the state or state agencies—deserve to be heard by judges who are accountable to voters statewide,” Huffman said. “The new 15th Court of Appeals will help equalize dockets on our existing appellate courts and allow judges to apply specialized precedent in complex subjects like administrative and constitutional law, while giving Texas voters oversight of a court that handles critical matters for the entire state.”

The 15th Court of Appeals will consist of a chief justice and four justices who will be elected statewide. The court will not hear criminal matters but will have exclusive jurisdiction over most civil cases either brought by or against the state or a state agency, and many cases in which a party has challenged the constitutionality of a state statute.

(Senator Joan Huffman represents District 17, which is comprised of Colorado, Jackson, Matagorda, and Wharton County and portions of Brazoria, Ft. Bend, Harris, and Waller County. Huffman currently serves as Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance, Chair of the Senate Special Committee on Redistricting, as a senior member of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice and the Legislative Budget Board.)

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