

TEXAS  
COMMISSION  
ON *JUDICIAL*  
*SELECTION*



*CHAIR:*

Mr. David J. Beck

*LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS:*

Senator Brian Birdwell  
Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa  
Senator Joan Huffman  
Senator Robert Nichols

Representative Todd Hunter  
Representative Brooks Landgraf  
Representative Ina Minjarez  
Representative Carl Sherman

*CITIZEN MEMBERS:*

Mr. Charles "Chip" Babcock, IV  
Hon. Martha Hill Jamison (Ret.)  
Hon. Wallace Jefferson (Ret.)  
Ms. Lynne Liberato  
Mr. David Oliveira  
Hon. Thomas Phillips (Ret.)

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**Texas Commission on Judicial Selection Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** August 7, 2020

**Convene:** 10:00 AM

**Attendance:** *Megan LaVoie*

**Members in Attendance**

Mr. David Beck  
Sen. Brian Birdwell  
Sen Robert Nichols  
Sen. Joan Huffman  
Sen. Juan Hinojosa  
Rep. Todd Hunter  
Rep. Brooks Landgraf  
Rep. Ina Minjarez  
Rep. Carl Sherman  
Mr. Charles Babcock  
Ms. Martha Hill Jamison  
Mr. Wallace Jefferson  
Ms. Lynne Liberato  
Mr. David Oliveira  
Mr. Thomas Phillips

**Minutes from Previous Meeting**

The July 10, 2020 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

**Invited Testimony**

Gary Bledsoe, President, Texas NAACP, discussed key points contained in his written testimony to the Commission. He outlined the historically limited representation of African Americans in the Texas judiciary. Mr. Bledsoe focused on the racial disparities and lack of trust the African American community has in the justice system, encouraging the need for increased confidence among minorities and increased diversity in the judiciary, while also requiring diversity training. He also discouraged judicial requirement qualifications that could inadvertently discriminate against minorities.

Chief Justice Ruth McGregor, Chair of The Sandra Day O'Connor Advisory Committee, Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS), explained the background of the IAALS and its evidence-based research in solving issues in the civil justice system to encourage making the justice system more accessible, efficient, and accountable with neutral based position and recommendations. Chief Justice McGregor discussed IAALS position on what the public expects and deserves from Judges within the system and the necessary qualifications for the judiciary.

Judge Martin Hoffman, 68<sup>th</sup> Civil District Court in Dallas, presented his proposal on judicial selection based on his experience on the process. Judge Hoffman proposes to allow incumbency designation in judicial primary elections to provide voters access to information on candidates for whom they are voting. It is Judge Hoffman's belief that this change would not require a Constitutional amendment. He provided materials to the Commission for its review.

**New Matters**

Chairman Beck discussed the upcoming public hearings and the limitations on the number due to the pandemic. The Commission identified potential locations of Tyler, Lufkin, El Paso, San Antonio, Dallas, Midland/Odessa, and Fort Bend county.

Lastly, Chairman Beck will distribute an outline he has composed on the final report to the Legislature a proposed timeline to complete and discuss the recommendations.

**Next Meeting** – September 18, 2020

**Adjourn – 11:50 am**