

By: Marchant

H.B. No. 2923

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

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relating to jury service.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 62.0141, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 62.0141. FAILURE TO ANSWER JURY SUMMONS. In addition to any criminal penalty prescribed by law, a person summoned for jury service who does not comply with the summons as required by law or who knowingly provides false information in a request for an exemption or to be excused from jury service is subject to a contempt action punishable by a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000.

SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 62, Government Code, is amended by adding Sections 62.0142 and 62.022 to read as follows:

Sec. 62.0142. POSTPONEMENT OF JURY SERVICE. (a) A person summoned for jury service may request a postponement of the person's initial appearance for jury service. The person may request the postponement by contacting the clerk of the court in person, in writing, or by telephone before the date on which the person is summoned to appear.

(b) On receipt of a request under Subsection (a), the clerk of the court shall grant the person a postponement if:

(1) the person has not been granted a postponement in that county during the one-year period preceding the date on which

1 the person is summoned to appear; and

2 (2) the person and the clerk determine a substitute  
3 date on which the person will appear for jury service that is not  
4 later than six months after the date on which the person was  
5 originally summoned to appear.

6 (c) A person who receives a postponement under Subsection  
7 (b) may request a subsequent postponement in the manner described  
8 by Subsection (a). The clerk of the court may approve the  
9 subsequent postponement only because of an extreme emergency that  
10 could not have been anticipated, such as a death in the person's  
11 family, sudden serious illness suffered by the person, or a natural  
12 disaster or national emergency in which the person is personally  
13 involved. Before the clerk may grant the subsequent postponement,  
14 the person and the clerk must determine a substitute date on which  
15 the person will appear for jury service that is not later than six  
16 months after the date on which the person was to appear after the  
17 postponement under Subsection (b).

18 Sec. 62.022. LIMITATION ON LENGTH OF SERVICE. A person is  
19 not required to appear for jury service for more than one day unless  
20 the person is selected to serve on a particular jury or is being  
21 considered to serve on a particular jury. Once selected, a juror  
22 shall serve on the jury until the jury renders a verdict, unless  
23 excused by the court.

24 SECTION 3. The changes in law made by this Act apply only to  
25 a person summoned to appear for jury service on or after the  
26 effective date of this Act. A person summoned to appear for jury  
27 service before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law

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1 in effect on the date the person was summoned to appear, and the  
2 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

3 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.