

1-1 By: Marchant (Senate Sponsor - Averitt) H.B. No. 2923  
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House May 19, 2003;  
1-3 May 20, 2003, read first time and referred to Committee on  
1-4 Jurisprudence; May 24, 2003, reported favorably by the following  
1-5 vote: Yeas 4, Nays 1; May 24, 2003, sent to printer.)

1-6 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
1-7 AN ACT

1-8 relating to jury service.

1-9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-10 SECTION 1. Section 62.0141, Government Code, is amended to  
1-11 read as follows:

1-12 Sec. 62.0141. FAILURE TO ANSWER JURY SUMMONS. In addition  
1-13 to any criminal penalty prescribed by law, a person summoned for  
1-14 jury service who does not comply with the summons as required by law  
1-15 or who knowingly provides false information in a request for an  
1-16 exemption or to be excused from jury service is subject to a  
1-17 contempt action punishable by a fine of not less than \$100 nor more  
1-18 than \$1,000.

1-19 SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 62, Government Code, is  
1-20 amended by adding Sections 62.0142 and 62.022 to read as follows:

1-21 Sec. 62.0142. POSTPONEMENT OF JURY SERVICE. (a) A person  
1-22 summoned for jury service may request a postponement of the  
1-23 person's initial appearance for jury service. The person may  
1-24 request the postponement by contacting the clerk of the court in  
1-25 person, in writing, or by telephone before the date on which the  
1-26 person is summoned to appear.

1-27 (b) On receipt of a request under Subsection (a), the clerk  
1-28 of the court shall grant the person a postponement if:

1-29 (1) the person has not been granted a postponement in  
1-30 that county during the one-year period preceding the date on which  
1-31 the person is summoned to appear; and

1-32 (2) the person and the clerk determine a substitute  
1-33 date on which the person will appear for jury service that is not  
1-34 later than six months after the date on which the person was  
1-35 originally summoned to appear.

1-36 (c) A person who receives a postponement under Subsection  
1-37 (b) may request a subsequent postponement in the manner described  
1-38 by Subsection (a). The clerk of the court may approve the  
1-39 subsequent postponement only because of an extreme emergency that  
1-40 could not have been anticipated, such as a death in the person's  
1-41 family, sudden serious illness suffered by the person, or a natural  
1-42 disaster or national emergency in which the person is personally  
1-43 involved. Before the clerk may grant the subsequent postponement,  
1-44 the person and the clerk must determine a substitute date on which  
1-45 the person will appear for jury service that is not later than six  
1-46 months after the date on which the person was to appear after the  
1-47 postponement under Subsection (b).

1-48 Sec. 62.022. LIMITATION ON LENGTH OF SERVICE. A person is  
1-49 not required to appear for jury service for more than one day unless  
1-50 the person is selected to serve on a particular jury or is being  
1-51 considered to serve on a particular jury. Once selected, a juror  
1-52 shall serve on the jury until the jury renders a verdict, unless  
1-53 excused by the court.

1-54 SECTION 3. The changes in law made by this Act apply only to  
1-55 a person summoned to appear for jury service on or after the  
1-56 effective date of this Act. A person summoned to appear for jury  
1-57 service before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law  
1-58 in effect on the date the person was summoned to appear, and the  
1-59 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

1-60 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

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