

By: Wentworth

S.B. No. 1709

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to alternate methods of responding to a jury summons.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 62, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 62.0111 to read as follows:

Sec. 62.0111. COMPUTER OR TELEPHONE RESPONSE TO SUMMONS.

(a) A plan authorized under Section 62.011 for the selection of names of prospective jurors may allow for a prospective juror to appear in response to a summons by:

(1) contacting the district clerk by computer;

(2) calling an automated telephone system; or

(3) appearing before the court in person.

(b) A plan adopted under Subsection (a) may allow for a prospective juror to provide information to the district clerk or for the clerk to provide information to the prospective juror by computer or automated telephone system, including:

(1) information that permits the court to determine whether the prospective juror is qualified for jury service under Section 62.102;

(2) information that permits the court to determine whether the prospective juror is exempt from jury service under Section 62.106;

(3) submission of a request by the prospective juror for a postponement of or excuse from jury service under Section

1 62.110;

2 (4) information for jury assignment under Section  
3 62.016, including:

4 (A) the prospective juror's postponement status;

5 (B) if the prospective juror could potentially  
6 serve on a jury in a justice court, the residency of the prospective  
7 juror; and

8 (C) if the prospective juror could potentially  
9 serve on a jury in a criminal matter, whether the prospective juror  
10 has been convicted of misdemeanor theft;

11 (5) completion and submission by the prospective juror  
12 of the written jury summons questionnaire under Section 62.0132;

13 (6) the prospective juror's electronic mail address;  
14 and

15 (7) notification to the prospective juror by  
16 electronic mail of:

17 (A) whether the prospective juror is qualified  
18 for jury service;

19 (B) the status of the exemption, postponement, or  
20 judicial excuse request of the prospective juror; or

21 (C) whether the prospective juror has been  
22 assigned to a jury panel.

23 (c) The district clerk shall purge the electronic mail  
24 address of a prospective juror collected under Subsection (b):

25 (1) if the prospective juror serves on a jury, not  
26 later than the 30th day after the date that:

27 (A) the county sends the person payment for jury

1 service; or

2 (B) the county would otherwise send the person  
3 payment for jury service, if the person has donated the payment  
4 under Section 61.003; or

5 (2) if the prospective juror does not serve on a jury,  
6 not later than the 30th day after the date that the court releases  
7 the person from jury service.

8 (d) To the extent practicable, the ratio of prospective  
9 jurors assigned to a particular jury panel who appear in response to  
10 a summons by contacting the district clerk by computer or calling an  
11 automated telephone system to prospective jurors who appear in  
12 person must equal the ratio of all prospective jurors assigned to a  
13 jury panel at the same time who appear by computer or automated  
14 telephone system to prospective jurors who appear in person.

15 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.