

By: Duncan

S.B. No. 1578

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to jurisdiction and venue in condemnation proceedings.

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

SECTION 1. Section 21.001, Property Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 21.001. CONCURRENT JURISDICTION. District courts and county courts at law have concurrent jurisdiction in eminent domain cases in every county in the state, notwithstanding any other law. A county court has no jurisdiction in eminent domain cases.

SECTION 2. Section 21.013, Property Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 21.013. VENUE; FEES AND PROCESSING FOR ACTION ~~[SUIT]~~ FILED IN DISTRICT COURT. (a) The venue of a condemnation proceeding is the county in which the owner of the property being condemned resides if the owner resides in a county in which part of the property is located. Otherwise, the venue of a condemnation proceeding is any county in which at least part of the property is located.

(b) Except where otherwise provided by law, a party initiating a condemnation proceeding ~~[in a county in which there is one or more county courts at law with jurisdiction]~~ shall file the petition with any clerk authorized to handle such filings for a ~~[that]~~ court that has jurisdiction in eminent domain cases ~~[or courts]~~.

1           (c) ~~[A party initiating a condemnation proceeding in a~~  
2 ~~county in which there is not a county court at law must file the~~  
3 ~~condemnation petition with the district clerk.]~~ The filing fee  
4 shall be due at the time of filing in accordance with Section  
5 51.317, Government Code.

6           (d) District and county clerks shall assign an equal number  
7 of eminent domain cases in rotation to each court with jurisdiction  
8 that the clerk serves.

9           SECTION 3. The change in law made by this Act applies only  
10 to a condemnation proceeding initiated on or after the effective  
11 date of this Act. A condemnation proceeding initiated before the  
12 effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect  
13 immediately before that date, and that law is continued in effect  
14 for that purpose.

15           SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
16 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
17 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
18 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
19 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.