

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Municipal courts provide citizens of the Lone Star State with a local forum where questions of law and fact can be resolved in regard to alleged violations of state law and municipal ordinances. Because citizens come into contact with municipal courts more than any other courts, the public impression of the Texas judicial system is largely dependent on their experience there.

Judges of the municipal courts function also as magistrates for the State of Texas, and in that role they perform such duties as issuing search and arrest warrants, giving magistrate warnings, and setting bail for offenses ranging from petty theft to murder.

Pledging to be impartial and to conform to the standards set by the Canons of Judicial Conduct, the estimated 6,000 employees of municipal courts work diligently to ensure the fair administration of justice while upholding the rigorous standards of professionalism. Municipal judges, clerks, court administrators, bailiffs, and warrant officers continually strive to improve the administration of justice through participation in judicial education programs, seminars, workshops, and the annual meetings of their state and local professional organizations.

Municipal courts in Texas play a vital role in preserving public safety, protecting the quality of life for area residents, and deterring future criminal behavior, and it is indeed fitting to recognize municipal judges and support personnel for their exemplary dedication to the communities they serve.

RESOLVED

That the 83rd Texas Legislature hereby recognize November 4-8, 2013, and November 3-7, 2014, as Municipal Courts Week and take special note of the important work performed by all those associated with the state's municipal courts.