

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HB 1495

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & CIVIL JURISPRUDENCE

Hearing Date: March 17, 2021 8:00 AM

Ramona Sonnier, Court Reporter

Self

Baytown, TX

Mr. Dutton this Bill directly targeting my profession as a court reporter. It is a must that you vote against this Bill. I am a single mother and my son has Type 1 Diabetes and if this Bill passes it will eliminate my ability to provide the necessary medication and medical needs that are critical to my son's wellbeing.

Javier Leal

Harris Count, TX Certified Shorthand Court Reporters.

Humble, TX

Hello. To whom it may concern. My name is Javier Leal.

I am a Texas court reporter. I am in favor of bill H.B.1737.

This bill requires the court reporter to utilize the most current technology available to deliver a digitally secure transcript for the witness to review and is a major step in ensuring that the integrity of the deposition transcript is maintained throughout the process.

kathy McDaniel, Ms. Kathy McDaniel

Self - court reporter

Waco, TX

As an official court reporter for 6 years, and a freelancer for 14, I am totally against this bill. A digital record can't do what officials do on a day-to-day basis

It's impossible. And what's scarier is the fact that the records aren't certified by a trained and professional eye. I am terrified of the possibility of capital murder cases being overturned because of a glitch in the system or something worse. Please kill this bill before it even makes it to the floor!!!!

Sandra Sahadi

None

Corpus Christi, TX

I am a conservative Republican, however

Am against this bill

Antoinette Booker, Self

Self

Dallas, TX

HB1495

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Kendra Gonzalez

Self

Banquete, TX

I believe Texas needs safe roads, and I ask you to OPPOSE HB 19. This bill will make it harder to hold trucking companies accountable when they violate safety standards, endangering all of us on the road. Trucking companies have little incentive to follow the rules and adopt safety measures without enforcement through our courts. Giving trucking corporations special privileges in civil cases will make it harder for victims of truck wrecks to hold them accountable. HB 19 stacks the deck against Texas citizens when they are forced to take dangerous trucking companies to court. These bills would be disastrous for road safety in Texas. Texas already has the worst record in the nation for large truck crashes. If these bills become law, they will provide even less incentive for trucking companies to follow the rules. VOTE NO on HB 19! If you are involved in a commercial vehicle crash, you are more likely to be injured or die than the truck driver. 72% of people killed in commercial motor vehicles crashes are occupants of other vehicles, meaning families die while the at-fault truck driver walks away. These large trucks can weigh up to 20 times more than the weight of an average car. If you survive a truck wreck, medical bills pile up quickly from the catastrophic injuries they cause. You might not be able to work, and your family pays the price. If the trucking company hires a driver with a bad safety record or an addiction, paralyzing a loved one in a crash, the trucking company should be held fully accountable. Our government should be focused on protecting life, not rewarding corporate wrongdoers for the harm they cause. HB 19 will only make it harder for Texas families to seek justice, leaving all of us to pay the cost. I urge you again, PLEASE VOTE NO on HB 19.

david sheller

self

houston, TX

I am opposed to this bill. Companies that hire other trucks as independent contractors get off the hook. It is free to look at Safer Inspection reports and you can obtain Inspection reports for a company from the DOT for the entire company. in a few minutes There are services that will check the inspections and keep up with the drivers for example \$800 for 22 trucks and drivers per month. The present bill allows companies to ignore the citations for equipment violations which are the law in Texas and federal law. Companies should be required to check these reports weekly or monthly. If you have a bad maintenance record you are not hired. For example I have seen trucking companies utilize an independent contractor for 7 years and never check their inspection reports which would show violations year after year for no brake lights, no Anti Lock Braking Systems and no automatic brake adjusters. these are all requirements of Texas and federal law. I think we all have to agree that trucks with these and other problems like steering issues are unsafe to the public. If you want to lower truck crashes and injuries AND INSURANCE PREMIUMS you should enforce the laws that are on the books and add the federal statutory requirements back into the bill. The Texas Supreme Court took out the statutory negligent hiring laws in Gonzalez v. Ramirez in 2015.. TRUCKERS WILL do the required maintenance if they are forced to do so because they want to keep working. Also side underride guards should be mandatory. They are mandatory in Europe since 1998 and in Canada. 300 people a year or more are killed in the US going under the side of 18 wheelers. That is a huge cost. The NHTSA and the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety along with the Canadian Government and many other government studies find that the guards greatly reduce crashes for a cost of \$2500 per truck or less and there are fuel savings as well. Failure to do this is like the Jayne Mansfield crash which mandated the back guards. \$2500 over 5 years is \$40 a month and less than 50 cents a load.

Oralia Garcia

self

CORPUS CHRISTI, TX

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Mary Easley, Self

Self

Fort Worth, TX

No comments at this time

REX HENDERSON

Myself

Midland, TX

Republicans are allowing this country to sink. Grow some fucking balls

Holly Giffin, Official Court Reporter

Self, Official Court Reporter, CSR, RPR-RMR-CRR (Licensed in Texas, Louisiana, and California)

Beaumont, TX

Representatives: I am writing in opposition to HB 228. I have been a court reporter for 35 years and am very proud of my profession. Any presumed cost savings of replacing or eliminating court reporters would be offset by the loss of quality of the verbatim record. The record prepared by a licensed court reporter is superior to an audio recording. Any inaudible or indiscernible testimony can be immediately clarified or corrected by a trained court reporter in the courtroom, resulting in a quality digital record that can be instantly searched, if needed. A record prepared via audio recording may not be able to decipher statements or testimony as witnesses may mumble, speak softly, or have difficulty using a microphone. Often witnesses begin their answer at the same time as the questioning attorney. A trained reporter is able to provide an accurate transcript, whereas, a transcriptionist of an audio recording would simply type "unintelligible." There are numerous examples of audio recordings malfunctioning. For example: State of Missouri v. Barber, No. WD74279, Court of Appeals of Missouri, Western District November 13, 2012. A defendant was found guilty of tampering with a witness in a child molestation case. The case was then appealed, but the entire testimony of the defendant, direct and cross, was not available. The case was remanded for a new trial. In State of North Carolina v. King, No. COA11-568, February 7, 2012, a defendant appealed a conviction of charges of cocaine possession and sale with a "habitual felon status." Portions of the transcript were missing. The "habitual felon status" was remanded for a new hearing. In Hamilton County, Ohio, January 20-31, 2011, recording equipment malfunctioned in grand jury proceedings for 146 cases, including a capital murder case, and were dismissed. Judge Mitch Templeton, of the 172nd District Court, has expressed his appreciation of the realtime translation I provide to him during jury selection, aiding in individual voir dire, and finds it helpful in retrieving testimony rapidly with a key word search for readback in answer to a jury's question. Although Judge Templeton handles a civil docket, he also presides over proceedings in our drug court in Jefferson County. He commented to me that whether it is a civil matter, such as a fatal car accident, or a criminal matter involving a felony offense, all parties deserve equal justice and a verbatim record taken by a qualified court reporter. The act of replacing human reporters with audio recording has been proven to be unsuccessful. It is similar to replacing language interpreters with translation software. A machine lacks ability to control and protect the record and to do the human aspects of the job. Again, as to cost savings, a reporter, as opposed to the County, purchases and maintains his or her own equipment, software, and insurance. The old adage, "You get what you pay for" applies here. Thank you.

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Inaganti Rao
"self" Manager
Frisco, TX

The government is accountable to its citizens for ensuring fair adjudication of laws and actions of public servants or lack thereof.