

By: Guillen

H.B. No. 2703

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a study on alternatives to litigation for disputed land title claims.

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

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. In this Act:

(1) "Land commissioner" means the commissioner of the General Land Office.

(2) "Land title" means the initial conveyance of real property in this state, as evidenced by a certificate, title, or patent.

SECTION 2. REVIEW OF LAND TITLE LITIGATION ALTERNATIVES.

(a) The land commissioner shall conduct a study of alternatives to litigation as a means for resolving disputed land title claims.

(b) The study must evaluate:

(1) the feasibility of creating a review board that is tasked with establishing title in the name of the appropriate owner of real property if title is not contested by another person; and

(2) the potential legal impact of a review board described by Subdivision (1) of this subsection.

SECTION 3. ADVISORY COMMITTEE. (a) An advisory committee is established to assist the land commissioner in conducting the study required by this Act. The advisory committee is composed of:

(1) three members who have expertise in land title claims, appointed by the governor;

1 (2) three members who have expertise in property law,
2 appointed by the governor;

3 (3) a designee of the lieutenant governor;

4 (4) a designee of the speaker of the house of
5 representatives;

6 (5) a designee of the land commissioner;

7 (6) a designee of the comptroller; and

8 (7) a designee of the attorney general.

9 (b) When making initial appointments under Subsection (a)
10 of this section, the governor shall designate one of the governor's
11 appointees as presiding officer of the committee.

12 (c) Members of the committee shall be appointed or
13 designated not later than December 31, 2023.

14 (d) The committee shall meet not later than the 30th day
15 after the date initial appointments or designations are made under
16 Subsection (a) of this section and shall meet regularly as
17 necessary at the call of the presiding officer.

18 (e) A committee member is not entitled to reimbursement of
19 expenses or to compensation.

20 (f) The committee is not subject to Chapter [2110](#), Government
21 Code.

22 (g) At the committee's request, the comptroller or any other
23 state agency, department, or office shall provide any assistance
24 the committee needs to perform the committee's duties.

25 SECTION 4. REPORT. Not later than January 1, 2025, the land
26 commissioner and the advisory committee shall prepare, and the land
27 commissioner shall provide to the governor, lieutenant governor,

1 and speaker of the house of representatives, a final report on the
2 feasibility of alternatives to litigation as a means for resolving
3 disputed land title claims. The final report must include:

4 (1) recommendations for how a land title review board
5 would operate and review land title disputes;

6 (2) pertinent case law and statutory law that would be
7 impacted by a land title review process;

8 (3) proposed legislation that would be necessary to
9 implement the recommendations made in the final report;

10 (4) any administrative recommendations; and

11 (5) a complete explanation of each of the land
12 commissioner's and committee's recommendations.

13 SECTION 5. EXPIRATION DATE. This Act expires June 1, 2025.

14 SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect September
15 1, 2023.