

By: Bryant

H.B. No. 3429

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to access to justice courts by legal aid offices or other providers of pro bono legal services.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 27, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 27.007 to read as follows:

Sec. 27.007. ACCESS TO JUSTICE COURTS FOR PROVISION OF PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES. On request of a legal aid office or other provider of pro bono legal services, each justice of the peace shall permit one or more representatives of the office or provider to be present in the justice court, including during in-person or remote proceedings, to conduct intakes or provide information, referrals, or other legal services to eligible litigants.

SECTION 2. Section 38.12, Penal Code, is amended by adding Subsection (h-1) to read as follows:

(h-1) It is a defense to prosecution under Subsection (d) that the attorney is engaged in conduct authorized under Section 27.007, Government Code.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.