



April 16, 2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The efficiency of the court system is critically important not just to the legal profession, but to the entire community. Currently, Brazos County has three (3) district courts and two (2) county courts-at-law that handle all the civil and criminal cases in our justice system above the justice of the peace level. In addition, there are several magistrates that help handle the day-to-day proceedings. However, only the elected judges of the five (5) courts listed above can conduct jury trials. Texas State Representative Kyle Kacal has filed House Bill 1134, which would create a new District Court in Brazos County.

The Brazos County Bar Association (BCBA) recently asked its member attorneys to complete a survey to obtain their opinions on the need for additional courts in Brazos County. Since these officers of the court are the some of the attorneys who operate daily in the Brazos County Courthouse, they rely on their experience in Brazos, as well as comparing their experiences with other counties in the area and across Texas, in forming their opinions.

Over fifty (50) attorneys responded to the survey. Of those responding, seventy-five percent (75%) stated they believed Brazos County needs another District Court. In addition, sixty-three (63%) stated they believed Brazos County needs another County Court-at-Law.

In addition, the survey asked whether the members believed Brazos County needed to add a statutory probate court, which would have original and exclusive jurisdiction over probate, guardianship cases, and mental health commitments. Of those who responded, thirty-nine percent (39%) believe Brazos County needs a statutory probate court, while thirty-one percent (31%) do not believe a statutory probate court is needed.

The Member attorneys also responded regarding their preference on the intermediate appellate jurisdiction over Brazos County, which is currently under the appellate jurisdiction of the 10th Court of Appeals in Waco, Texas. The attorneys were asked to rank in order of preference (1 being strongest preference and 5 being least preferred) the following options:

1. The appellate jurisdiction to stay the same under the 10th Court of Appeals and no changes are needed;
2. The appellate jurisdiction to stay the same under the 10th Court of Appeals, but the court should add at least one additional justice to the 10th Court of Appeals;
3. Move Brazos County under the jurisdiction of an existing appellate court;
4. Allow Brazos County be under the appellate jurisdiction of 10th Court of Appeals and an additional court of appeals which would allow Brazos County to have the option to appeal to multiple appellate courts;
5. Become part of a new appellate court created by the Texas legislature that includes Brazos County and surrounding counties.

Nineteen (19) of the thirty-five (35) attorneys who responded to the survey question indicated that it was the strongest preference that Brazos County be part of new appellate court created by the Texas legislature that would include Brazos County and surrounding counties.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this release, please contact Brazos County Bar Association President Matt Doss at 979-776-1325, or matt@youngkinlaw.com.