

TEXAS FAIR DEFENSE PROJECT

The Texas Fair Defense Project works to improve the fairness of Texas's criminal courts and ensure that all Texans have access to justice. We work to ensure that people who are accused of crimes aren't stripped of their rights just because they don't have enough money to hire an attorney. We also challenge policies that create modern-day debtors' prisons filled with poor people who cannot afford to pay fines, fees or other government debt.

During the 84th Texas Legislature, the Texas Fair Defense Project supports legislative proposals to:

- Help Texans caught in a cycle of poverty due to suspension of their driver's license for unpaid government debt. **HB 1567** (Turner, S.), **HB 1795** (Turner, S.)/**SB 1056** (Hinojosa), **HB 2671** (Thompson, S.);
- Ensure Texans who owe a government debt are treated fairly. **HB 3633** (Herrero)/**SB 544** (West), **HB 1516** (Walle)/**SB 663** (Rodriguez), **HB 3892** (Canales);
- Adjust criminal penalties for non-violent offenses to improve the function of the Texas justice system. **HB 253** (Thompson, S.), **HB 254** (Thompson, S.), **HB 507** (Moody), **HB 3326** (Thompson, S.); and
- Ensure low-income Texans jailed in one county on a warrant issued by a different county receive appointment of counsel and are not unnecessarily detained. **HB 2525** (Coleman)/**SB 1517** (Seliger & West).

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