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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Baillie Hearne
(512) 480-8014

**TEXAS BAR FOUNDATION GIVES CHIEF JUSTICE NATHAN L. HECHT
STATEWIDE RECOGNITION**

Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht of Austin received the 2022 Samuel Pessarra Outstanding Jurist Award from the Texas Bar Foundation. The award was established in 1995, when the Foundation received a bequest to the endowment from the estate of Mrs. Samuel Pessarra in honor of her late husband Samuel Pessarra for the purpose of funding the Outstanding Jurist Award. Samuel Pessarra, a native of Quintana, attended Baylor University and Baylor University School of Law. Mr. Pessarra was a member of the Brazoria County Bar Association, where he served as president, director and secretary. The Pessarra Outstanding Jurist Award honors an active Federal or State Judge (including retired judges or judges of senior status who continue to sit) who exhibits an exceptionally outstanding reputation for competency, efficiency and integrity.

Nathan L. Hecht is the 27th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas. He has been elected to the Court seven times, first in 1988 as a Justice, and in 2014 and 2020 as Chief Justice. He is the longest-serving member of the Court in Texas history and the longest-tenured Texas judge in active service. Throughout his service on the Court, he has overseen revisions to the rules of administration, practice, and procedure in Texas courts. He is also active in the Court's efforts to assure that Texans living below the poverty level, as well as others with limited means, have access to basic civil legal services. He began his judicial service in 1981 by appointment to the district court. He holds a B.A. degree with honors in philosophy from Yale University, and a J.D. degree cum laude from the SMU School of Law. He served as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Reserve Judge Advocate General Corps. He is Immediate Past President of the national Conference of Chief Justices, a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a Life Member of the American Law Institute and member of Council.

Chief Justice Hecht will be publicly recognized at the Texas Bar Foundation Annual Dinner held on June 10, 2022 at the Marriott Marquis in Houston. SMU Dedman School of Law will receive a \$1,000 scholarship donation in honor of Chief Justice Hecht.

Founded in 1965 by attorneys determined to assist the public and improve the profession, the Texas Bar Foundation has become the largest charitably-funded bar foundation in the country. The Texas Bar Foundation relies on the contributions of its Fellows to improve the lives of Texans. To date, through the generosity of the Fellows, the Texas Bar Foundation has awarded more than \$23 million in grants to numerous organizations across the state.

Election to the Fellows of the Texas Bar Foundation is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon a member of the State Bar of Texas, representing one-third of one percent of Texas attorneys. Selection is based on an outstanding record in the legal profession as well as proven commitment to support the community at large. For more information about the Texas Bar Foundation, please visit www.txbf.org.

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