

STATE OF TEXAS

RESOLUTION

of the

TEXAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Public Trust and Confidence Committee Civics Education Recommendation

WHEREAS, the Texas Judicial Council is the policymaking body for the Texas Judicial Branch, created under Chapter 71, Texas Government Code; and

WHEREAS, the Council is charged with improving the administration of justice; and

WHEREAS, the Public Trust and Confidence Committee was charged with continuing to monitor public trust and confidence in the Texas Judiciary and recommend any necessary reforms to increase public support and respect; and

WHEREAS, for many years, the Judicial Council has supported public trust and confidence initiatives that promote civics engagement and education; and

WHEREAS, according to the Annenberg Public Policy Center's 2023 Annenberg Constitution Day Civic Survey, approximately one-third of U.S. adults are unable to name all three branches of government and one in six cannot name a single branch; and

WHEREAS, even though the Third Branch outpaces its sister branches in public confidence surveys, confidence in the state and federal court systems remains mixed; and

WHEREAS, research suggests that civics education exposure in school translates into greater civics knowledge; and

WHEREAS, the public should be further educated on the differences between the Judiciary and its sister branches, on how the judicial system was designed, and on how courts operate differently from the political branches;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Texas Judicial Council recommends that the Legislature amend state law to require comprehensive civics education that includes an emphasis on the judiciary, its design, and how the state and local court systems operate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan L. Hecht", written over a horizontal line.

Honorable Nathan L. Hecht
Chair, Texas Judicial Council