



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 5, 2019

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Hancock Files Legislative Package on Property Tax & Appraisal Reform

SB 1428, 1429, 1430 provide homeowners improved transparency, appraisal review recourse

AUSTIN, TX - Chairman Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills) yesterday filed additional legislation to give Texans more tools in the property tax and home appraisal appeals process.

"Reining in local property tax growth is our top priority this legislative session," said Chairman Hancock, "but that has to be part of a comprehensive strategy to overhaul the entire property tax system, home appraisals included. The bills I filed today each play a small role in achieving a big goal -- real and impactful property tax reform."

SB 1428

The Texas Tax Code outlines specific requirements for appraisal districts and Appraisal Review Boards (ARBs) that are designed to provide taxpayers fair and unbiased hearings when protesting a property appraisal. For instance, an appraisal district must apply homestead exemptions to appraisal records before submitting them to an ARB, cases must be randomly assigned to ARBs to prevent bias, and ARBs must provide taxpayers with copies of the evidence that the Chief Appraiser intends to introduce at the protest hearing at least 14 days in advance. These protections, however, have not been enforceable.

SB 1428 gives enforcement authority to the public by allowing a property owner to seek relief in district court to compel compliance with Tax Code protections and ARB rules and regulations.

SB 1429

Under existing law, property owners can dispute the ARB-determined appraised value of their property through binding arbitration or litigation. A lawsuit must be filed within 60 days of an ARB notice, but a binding arbitration request, which is generally the less expensive option for the homeowner, must be filed within 45 days.

SB 1429 extends the deadline to file a binding arbitration request from 45 to 60 days to match the litigation deadline, making it easier for homeowners to seek the more cost-effective route.

SB 1430

Another key concern raised by property owners during recent committee hearings was confusing terminology in the Texas Tax Code. In particular, it was brought to Hancock's attention that few homeowners are aware of their right to petition a tax rate ratification election when a taxing jurisdiction exceeds the statutorily-set "rollback rate."

To provide clarity on this issue, Hancock adopted an amendment to SB 2, the Property Tax Reform Act of 2019, renaming the rollback rate to "voter-approval rate." SB 1430 extends this terminology change to all applicable sections of Texas code to provide transparency and clarity.

Hancock previously filed SB 443 to extend the disaster relief property tax homestead exemption from two to five years. To read the full text of any of these appraisal and tax reform bills, visit Texas Legislature Online at <https://capitol.texas.gov/>.

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Sen. Hancock represents [District 9](#), which includes portions of Dallas and Tarrant Counties. He currently serves as Chairman of the Texas Senate Committee on Business & Commerce and Vice Chair of the Texas Senate Committee on Transportation.