

- SUBJECT:** Establishing a time limit for court reporters to provide a transcript
- COMMITTEE:** Judiciary — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Hartnett, Alonzo, R. Cook, Gonzales, Goolsby, Hopson, Krusee
0 nays
2 absent — Homer, Hughes
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but not testify:* Darrin Hall, City of Houston; Guy Herman, Texas Statutory Probate Judges)
Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Under Government Code, sec. 52.047(a), a person may apply in writing for a legal transcript prepared by an official court reporter. The reporter must provide the transcript on receipt of the transcript fee unless the requesting person is entitled to a free transcript due to indigency.
- DIGEST:** HB 335 would amend Government Code, sec. 52.047(a) to require a court reporter to provide a transcript no later than 120 days after receiving a written request and either payment of the transcript fee or waiver of the fee by establishing indigency.

The bill would apply only to transcript application requests made on or after its September 1, 2007, effective date.
- SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 335 would address the need for interested parties to receive transcripts from court reporters within a reasonable time limit. Four months is ample time for court reporters to provide requested transcripts while successfully performing their other duties. This bill would not affect the production of appellate transcripts, which typically are lengthy and could be difficult to produce under deadline pressure.

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would impose no significant cost to the state or local governments. Any small cost associated with instituting the time limit would be more than outweighed

by the savings that would result from eliminating the delays that interested parties currently endure when transcripts are not provided timely.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

HB 335 would create additional requirements for court reporters that could add costs. This new deadline for preparing transcripts could take court reporters away from their regular duties, causing local governments to incur expenses from contracting for additional court reporter services or paying overtime to employees.