

- SUBJECT:** Providing notice of self-help resources on court websites
- COMMITTEE:** Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Smithee, Farrar, Gutierrez, Hernandez, Laubenberg, Murr, Neave, Rinaldi, Schofield
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Brett Merfish, Texas Appleseed; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Trish McAllister, Texas Access to Justice Commission; Craig Hopper)
- Against — None
- On — David Slayton, Office of Court Administration; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Dale Propp, State Law Library)
- BACKGROUND:** Observers have noted that resources for people who either cannot afford legal services or do not qualify for free legal services are scarce, and that individuals representing themselves in court can have difficulty accessing consistent, reliable legal information.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 1532 would require the clerk of each court in Texas that maintains a website to post a link to the self-help resources website designated by the Office of Court Administration (OCA), in consultation with the Texas Access to Justice Commission, that contains:
- lawyer referral services;
 - the name, location and website address of local legal aid offices; and
 - any court-affiliated self-help center serving the county where the court was located.
- The court's website also would be required to have a link to the State Law Library's website.

The bill would require clerks to conspicuously display a sign in their offices containing the information described above. The OCA would prescribe the format for providing the information on the sign and online.

The bill would take effect September, 1, 2017.

NOTES:

A companion bill, SB 1911 by Zaffirini, was approved by the Senate on April 26.