



**Tom Ramsey, P.E., Commissioner**  
Harris County Precinct 3

March 22, 2021

**AGENDA ITEM**

Members of Commissioners Court  
Administration Building  
Harris County, Texas

Members of the Court:

Commissioner of Precinct Three requests discussion and possible action on a resolution supporting Senate Bill 21 in the 87<sup>th</sup> session of the Texas Legislature.

Your consideration and approval of this request is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Tom S. Ramsey, P.E.  
County Commissioner  
Precinct Three

TR:cj



# Resolution

WHEREAS, On February 26, 2021, Senator Joan Huffman filed Senate Bill 21 relating to rules for fixing the amount of bail, to the release of certain defendants on a bail bond or personal bond, to related duties of a magistrate in a criminal case, to the reporting of information pertaining to bail bonds, and to the regulation of charitable bail organizations; and,

WHEREAS, This bill, given an extremely low number by the Lieutenant Governor to underscore its priority in the Texas Senate, seeks to address repeat violent offenders from committing new crimes while out on bond; and,

WHEREAS, Offenders charged with new crimes while on bond has risen from 7,452 in 2016 to 18,796 in 2020. Further, offenders on multiple bonds rose, as well. In 2016, 1,812 offenders had 2-4 bonds; in 2020, 7,312 offenders had 2-4 bonds. In 2016, 33 offenders had 5-7 bonds; in 2020, 555 offenders had 5-7 bonds. In 2016 zero offenders had 8 plus bonds; in 2020, 74 offenders had 8 plus bonds; and,

WHEREAS, Violent crimes by offenders on bond has put our community at heightened risk. In 2016, 33 homicides were committed by those on bond; in 2020, that number rose to 72 homicides. In 2016, 36 on bond committed sexual assaults; 2020 saw number on bond committing rise to 92 sexual assaults. 2016, 710 assaults committed by those on bond with that number rising to 3,028 in 2020. Robberies were committed by 232 on bond in 2016, and the number was 634 in 2020. All or most of these crimes committed by offenders on numerous bonds could and should have been avoided; and,

WHEREAS, For violent offenders granted Personal Recognizance (PR) bonds, the numbers are frightening. In 2016, 117 were granted. In 2020, 1,097 were given. PR Bonds were granted for capital murder, murder, manslaughter, aggravated robbery, aggravated sexual assault, aggravated kidnapping, aggravated assault, aggravated human trafficking, robbery, and sexual assault; and,

WHEREAS, This growing pandemic of violent crime committed by offenders on bond was emphasized during testimony in the Senate Jurisprudence Committee on March 18, 2021, by Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg who stated, "Crime is up, Ladies and Gentlemen, and it is associated with bail.", and by Administrative Director David Slayton of the Texas Judicial Council who related "...twenty percent more crimes are committed; twelve times more violent crimes are committed by dangerous people who get out on bond."; and,

WHEREAS, This legislation is critical to the safety of our Harris County Residents to provide protection for our most vulnerable populations, for crime victims, to allow law enforcement to fulfill their sworn duties, and to preserve the ruling of the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals for the accused.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Harris County Commissioners Court supports Senator Joan Huffman and her ongoing efforts to work with all stakeholders during this 87th Session of the Texas Legislature to mold Senate Bill 21 from its initial draft into its final form for passage to ensure that our residents are protected from those who would erode the security of our homes and our community and that due process is provided for the accused.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that this resolution be spread upon the minutes of The Harris County Commissioners Court this 30th day of March 2021.

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Lina Hidalgo  
County Judge

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Rodney Ellis  
Commissioner Precinct 1

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Adrian Garcia  
Commissioner Precinct 2

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Tom S. Ramsey, P.E.  
Commissioner Precinct 3

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R. Jack Cagle  
Commissioner Precinct 4

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teneshia Hudspeth, County Clerk  
Harris County, Texas