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## Is There Meat in Those Beans?

### The 2019 Texas Estate and Trust Legislative Update

**Presented by Craig Hopper**

**Written by William D. Pargaman**

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## The 2019 Texas Estate and Trust Legislative Update

(Including Decedents' Estates, Guardianships, Trusts,  
Powers of Attorney, and Other Related Matters)

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### **Legal Experience**

Bill Pargaman has been a partner in the Austin law firm of Saunders, Norval, Pargaman & Atkins since July of 2012. He has been certified as a specialist in Estate Planning and Probate Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (since 1986) and has been a Fellow in the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (since 1994). He is very active in the Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law Section of the State Bar of Texas, having served as REPTIL's Chair for the 2015-2016 bar year, as chair of its Estate and Trust Legislative Affairs Committee for the 2009, 2011, and 2013 legislative sessions, and as a Council member and chair of REPTIL's Trusts Committee from 2004 to 2008.

Bill's practice involves the preparation of wills, trusts and other estate planning documents, charitable planning, and estate administration and alternatives to administration. He advises clients on the organization and maintenance of business entities such as corporations, partnerships, and limited liability entities. He represents nonprofit entities with respect to issues involving charitable trusts and endowments. Additionally, he represents clients in contested litigation involving estates, trusts and beneficiaries, and tax issues.

### **Education**

- Doctor of Jurisprudence, *with honors*, University of Texas School of Law, 1981, Order of the Coif, Chancellors
- Bachelor of Arts, Government, *with high honors*, University of Texas at Austin, 1978, Phi Beta Kappa

### **Professional Licenses**

- Attorney at Law, Texas, 1981

### **Court Admissions**

- United States Tax Court

### **Prior Experience**

- Brown McCarroll, LLP. (now Husch Blackwell LLP), 1981 – 2012

### **Speeches and Publications**

Mr. Pargaman has been a speaker, author, or course director at numerous seminars, including:

- State Bar of Texas (Texas BarCLE) – Advanced Estate Planning and Probate Course, Advanced Estate Planning Strategies Course, Estate Planning and Probate Drafting Course, Advanced Guardianship Law Course, Advanced Real Estate Law Course, Advanced Real Estate Drafting Course, Advanced Tax Law Course, State Bar College Summer School, State Bar Annual Meeting, Practice Skills for New Lawyers, Essentials for the General Practitioner, Miscellaneous Webcasts, and more
- Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law Section Annual Meeting
- University of Texas Estate Planning, Guardianship, and Elder Law Conference
- South Texas College of Law Wills and Probate Institute
- Estate Planning & Community Property Law Journal Seminar
- Texas NAELA Summer Conference
- University of Houston Law Foundation General Practice Institute, and Wills and Probate Institute

- Austin Bar Association Estate Planning and Probate Section Annual Probate and Estate Planning Seminar
- Austin Bar Association and Austin Young Lawyers Association Legal Malpractice Seminar
- Dallas Bar Association Probate, Trusts & Estate Section
- Houston Bar Association Probate, Trusts & Estate Section
- Tarrant County Probate Bar Association
- Hidalgo County Bar Association Estate Planning and Probate Section
- Bell County Bench Bar Conference
- Midland College/Midland Memorial Foundation Annual Estate Planning Seminar
- Austin Chapter, Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants, Annual Tax Update
- Texas Bankers Association Advanced Trust Forum
- Texas Credit Union League Compliance, Audit & Human Resources Conference
- Estate Planning Councils in Austin, Amarillo, Corpus Christi, Lubbock, San Antonio, and Tyler
- Austin Association of Life Underwriters

### **Professional Memberships and Activities**

- American College of Trust and Estate Counsel, Fellow
- State Bar of Texas
  - Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law Section, Member (Chair, 2015-2016)
    - Real Estate, Probate, and Trust Law Council, Member, 2004–2008
    - Estate and Trust Legislative Affairs Committee, Member, 2000–Present (Chair, 2008–2013)
    - Public Service Committee, Chair, 2013–2014
    - Trusts Committee, Member, 2000–2010 (Chair, 2004–2008)
    - Uniform Trust Code Study Project, Articles 7–9 & UPIA, Subcommittee Member, 2000–2003
  - Continuing Legal Education Committee, 2018-2021
  - Texas Board of Legal Specialization (Estate Planning and Probate Law), Examiner, 1995-1997
- Estate Planning Council of Central Texas, Member (President, 1991-1992)
- Austin Bar Association, Member
  - Estate Planning and Probate Section, Member (Chair, 1992-1993, Board Member, 1997-1999)

### **Honors**

- Recipient, Texas Bar CLE STANDING OVATION award, 2014
- Listed in The Best Lawyers in America® (2019 Trusts & Estates “Lawyer of the Year” in Austin, TX)
- Listed in *Texas Super Lawyers* (Texas Monthly)
- Listed in The Best Lawyers in Austin (Austin Monthly)

### **Community Involvement**

- St. Stephen’s Episcopal School Professional Advisory Council, Past Member
- City of Austin, XERISCAPE Advisory Board, Past Member
- Volunteer Guardianship Program of Family Eldercare, Inc. of Austin, Past Member, Advisory Board

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### **AREAS OF PRACTICE**

Probate litigation, probate administration, guardianship administration, trust administration, and estate planning law.

### **EDUCATION**

Juris Doctor degree, Duke University School of Law, 1995.

Bachelor of Arts degree with high honors, Plan II program, University of Texas at Austin, 1990

### **PROFESSIONAL HISTORY**

Hopper Mikeska, PLLC, 2012-Present

Hopper & Associates, P.C., 2005 - 2012

Shareholder, Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody, 1998 - 2005

Law Clerk, Honorable Guy Herman, Travis County Probate Court No. 1, 1996-1998

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Board Certified in Estate Planning and Probate Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization

Fellow, American College of Trusts and Estates Counsel

Member, Austin Bar Association

Member, State Bar of Texas

Member, SBOT Real Estate, Probate and Trust Law (REPTL) Section Treasurer 2019-2020; Council Member 2010-2014; Chair of Estate and Trust Legislative Affairs Committee 2014-2019

Member, Estate Planning Council of Central Texas; Director 2008-2014; Chair 2012-2013

Member, Travis County Bar Association Probate and Estate Planning Section; Director, 1999- 2004; Chair, 2003

### **PUBLICATIONS**

O'Connor's Texas Probate Law Handbook, 2018-Present

Texas Guardianship Manual, State Bar of Texas, Manual Committee 2013-Present

O'Connor's Estates Code Plus, co-author, 2012-Present

### **RECENT PRESENTATIONS/PAPERS**

- Speaker, 2017 Trusts and Estates Legislative Update, numerous locations in 2017
- Author/Moderator, "How 2015 [Guardianship] Changes Are Affecting Your Practice," SBOT Advanced Guardianship Course 2016, Dallas
- Panelist, "Peace Treaties: Considerations when Negotiating, Drafting & Enforcing Settlement Agreements and Releases," SBOT Estate Planning and Probate Drafting Course, Houston 2015
- Speaker, 2015 Trusts and Estates Legislative Update, numerous locations in 2015-2016 Author/Speaker, "Extraordinary Remedies in Probate Proceedings," SBOT Probate and Estate Planning Drafting Course 2014, Dallas
- Author/Speaker, "Whack-a-Mole: Handling Problem Litigants and the Occasional Overzealous Ad Litem," SBOT Advanced Guardianship Course 2014, Dallas;
- Speaker, "Mock Guardianship Hearing—How and When to Put Your Ward on the Stand," SBOT Advanced Guardianship Course 2014, Dallas; Tarrant County Bar Association Probate Litigation Seminar 2014, Ft Worth
- Speaker, "Basic Guardianship," Docket Call in Probate Court, San Antonio, Texas 2014
- Speaker, "Ask the Experts" panel 15<sup>th</sup> Annual University of Texas Estate Planning, Guardianship and Elder Law Conference, Galveston 2013
- Author/Speaker, "Creating a Travis County Guardianship," Austin Advisors Forum, Austin 2013
- Course Director, SBOT Advanced Guardianship and Elder Law Courses, Houston, 2013
- Speaker, "Alternatives to Guardianship" and "Ask the Experts" panel 14<sup>th</sup> Annual University of Texas Estate Planning, Guardianship and Elder Law Conference, Galveston 2012
- Author/Speaker, "Drafting the Estate and Trust Distribution Documents," SBOT Advanced Drafting Course, Dallas 2011

- Speaker, “Contested Guardianships,” SBOT Advanced Guardianship Course 2011, Houston; South Texas College of Law 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Wills and Probate Institute, Houston 2011
- Author/Speaker, “The Role of the Guardian,” 13<sup>th</sup> Annual University of Texas Estate Planning, Guardianship and Elder Law Conference, Galveston 2011
- Speaker, “Call in the Sheriff: Handling Overzealous Ad Litem and Other Outlaws,” SBOT Advanced Guardianship Course 2010, Houston
- Author/Speaker, “Extraordinary Preparation for Mediation in Guardianship Disputes,” SBOT Advanced Guardianship Course 2009, Houston
- Author/Speaker, “Extraordinary Remedies in Probate Proceedings,” SBOT Advanced Estate Planning and Probate Course 2008, Dallas
- Panel Member, “Ask the Experts,” and “Former Statutory Probate Court Staff Attorneys Panel” 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Intermediate Estate Planning, Guardianship and Elder Law Conference, Galveston, Texas, August 2007
- Speaker, “Attorney Ad Litem Duties” and Panel Member, “Ask the Experts,” 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Intermediate Estate Planning, Guardianship and Elder Law Conference, Galveston, Texas, August 2006
- Speaker/Panel Member, SBOT Building Blocks of Probate and Estate Planning: Probate Administration, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013
- Author/Speaker, “Using Independent Facilitators to Resolve Probate Disputes,” Guardianship and Elder Law Conference, Galveston, Texas, August 2004

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# Is There Meat in Those Beans?

## The 2019 Texas Estate and Trust Legislative Update

(Including Decedents' Estates, Guardianships, Trusts,  
Powers of Attorney, and Other Related Matters)

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### 1. The Preliminaries.

**1.1 Introduction and Scope.** The 86<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the Texas Legislature spans the 140 days beginning January 8, 2019, and ending May 27, 2019. This paper presents a summary of the bills that relate to probate (*i.e.*, decedents' estates), guardianships, trusts, powers of attorney, and several other areas of interest to estate and probate practitioners. Issues of interest to elder law practitioners are touched upon, but are not a focus of this paper. (And, to be honest, sometimes I go off on a tangent and discuss a bill of interest to me that has nothing to do with any of the areas mentioned above.)

**1.2 CMA Disclaimers.** While reading this paper, please keep in mind the following:

- I've made every reasonable attempt to provide accurate descriptions of the contents of bills, their effects, and in some cases, their background.
- Despite rumors to the contrary, I am human. And have been known to make mistakes.
- In addition, some of the descriptions in this paper admittedly border on editorial opinion, in which case the opinion is my own, and not necessarily that of REPTL, Craig Hopper, or anyone else.
- I often work on this paper late at night, past my normal bedtime, perhaps, even, under the influence of strategic amounts of Johnnie Walker Black (donations of Red, Black, Green, Gold, Blue, Platinum, or even Swing happily accepted!). Craig Hopper has informed me that he's also happy to accept donations of Scotch.
- As companion bills make their way through the legislative process, I usually base descriptions on the most recently approved version in either chamber. In the case of REPTL bills, I sometimes have access to drafts of substitutes before they are officially posted, in which case the descriptions may be based on what we think the bill will look like, rather than what the currently-online version looks like.
- As a consequence, while the descriptions contained in this paper are hopefully accurate at the time they are written, they may no longer accurately reflect the

contents of a bill at a later stage in the legislative process.

Therefore, you'll find directions in Section 1.6 on page 2 for obtaining copies of the actual bills themselves so you may review and analyze them yourself before relying on any information in this paper.

**1.3 If You Want to Skip to the Good Stuff ...** If you don't want to read the rest of these preliminary matters and want to skip to the legislation itself, you'll find it beginning with **Part 6 on page 7**.

**1.4A Note About Linking to the Electronic Version.** Feel free to link to the electronic version of this paper if you'd like. If you do, use the URL found on the cover page to link to the most recent version of the paper:

[www.snpalaw.com/resources/2019LegislativeUpdate](http://www.snpalaw.com/resources/2019LegislativeUpdate)

Once you click on that link, you'll open a PDF version of this paper. However, **don't** copy the URL that you'll find in your browser's address bar when you open the PDF! That's likely to be a 100+ character web address that will take you to that particular version of the paper only, and only so long as that version remains posted. Trust me – the link I've given you will take you to the right version each time.

And note that you can bring up my previous legislative updates going back to 2009 by substituting the appropriate odd-numbered year for "2019" in the URL.

**1.5 Where You'll Be Able to Find the Statutory Language After the Session's Over.** In previous legislative updates, after the session was over and we knew what had passed, I added attachments to the update that included the actual language of bills marked to show what had been added or deleted. But this was quite lengthy. It took over 100 pages in the 2017 update, more than doubling the size of the paper. So, in an effort to be green (for anyone getting a hard copy), we're going to change things up. I've prepared a separate supplement that contains all of that statutory language – or at least the language I deem worthy to include. You may download it by pointing your browser to:

Find the full text of this and thousands of other resources from leading experts in dozens of legal practice areas in the [UT Law CLE eLibrary \(utcle.org/elibrary\)](https://utcle.org/elibrary)

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