

Driving Texans to Debt: The Use of Texas' Failure to Appear/Pay Program in San Antonio¹

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The state's Failure to Appear/Pay Program (FTAP) allows participating municipal and justice of the peace courts to place a hold on a person's ability to renew their driver's license if they are unable to pay the fines and fees associated with low-level, fine-only offenses (e.g., traffic tickets). Among Texas cities, San Antonio is one of the heaviest users of the FTAP Program (aka the "OmniBase Program," so named after the private vendor that operates it – OmniBase Services of Texas (OST)).² OST manages a database of holds, as well as a searchable online tool that the Department of Public Safety (DPS) directs residents to use to find hold information.³ Each hold costs \$10 to lift, \$6 of which goes to OST, while the remaining \$4 goes to the court.⁴

When a person's license with an OmniBase hold (or holds – as they can accumulate across failed appearances) expires, they cannot renew it until *all* holds are lifted. Usually, courts require that *all* court debt is completely paid off before lifting said holds. For just *one* speeding ticket from the City of San Antonio, one's debt could range from \$213 to \$402.⁵ Courts can exercise discretion to lift these holds once an individual has made other arrangements (e.g., payment plan, community service) with the court.⁶ Again, however, it is rare for a court to do so before *all* court debt is completely paid off. Additionally, payment alternatives are rarely used to close out cases.

The San Antonio Municipal Court has almost 88,000 outstanding holds on people's licenses.⁷ Combined with the nearly 90,000 holds from Bexar County Justice of the Peace courts and the thousands of holds from municipal courts in the surrounding suburbs, low-income San Antonio residents shoulder a massive burden from the court's use of the state's FTAP Program.⁸ The residents impacted are overwhelmingly people of color (see Figure 1 and Table 1).

Debt-based holds prohibit license renewals due to financial hardship, not due to dangerous driving. Because driving is essential for daily needs such as commuting to work, school, and medical appointments, many individuals are forced to drive with an invalid license to make ends meet, putting them at risk of receiving more tickets for driving with an invalid license. Each unpaid ticket can result in additional debt, warrants, and license holds/suspensions – all of which trap people in a cycle of debt and poverty with no time restrictions.

The City of San Antonio has been working to implement important workforce development and economic recovery programs post-pandemic, focusing on improving racial and economic equity.⁹ For these initiatives to succeed, the city must eliminate counterproductive barriers to employment that exacerbate racial and economic injustice. **Thus, San Antonio should cancel the city's contract to participate in the OmniBase Program, just like the cities of Austin, Dallas, and Harris County have all voted to do over the last three years.**

The FTAP Program is a Major Barrier to Low-Income San Antonio Residents Getting a Job and Keeping a Job

Debt-based license restrictions frequently establish a direct pathway from a single traffic ticket to long-term unemployment.¹⁰ The data shows that thousands of San Antonio residents are being subjected to this pathway. The people harmed by these programs do not have money to pay their fines and fees, rendering them in high need of employment. Enacting *driving-related penalties* for nonpayment of court debt compounds this financial distress and makes it more difficult for people to drive to their jobs. This isn't very sensible, given that a driver's license is essential to get to work and is often a prerequisite to apply in many sectors of our economy.

Four out of five San Antonio residents drive to work.¹¹ The lack of a valid license is a significant barrier to holding an existing job and obtaining a new one. This barrier is prevalent in industries like construction, healthcare, and manufacturing – jobs that often pay above minimum wage and may help families escape poverty. The FTAP Program makes it impossible for individuals to legally drive to work until their court debt is paid off, leading to a loss of jobs and slower economic recovery for the city. On the other hand, restoring driver's licenses can contribute to economic growth. Research shows that having a driver's license makes it twice as likely for a person to have earnings above the poverty level.¹²

The FTAP Program Most Heavily Burdens Low-Income San Antonio Communities with High Concentrations of Residents of Color

In-depth analyses of local data from Dallas and Houston show that OmniBase holds are overwhelmingly concentrated in low-income zip codes.¹³ San Antonio is no exception. Data from the San Antonio Municipal Court indicates that FTAP holds are most heavily concentrated in zip codes where the median income is far below the median income in San Antonio and Bexar County. The map in Figure 1 represents a snapshot of all outstanding holds as of the date the data was requested last year. This means that more holds have been placed or past holds have been cleared between the request date and this brief's publication.

The ten zip codes with the highest concentration of holds have an average median household income of \$37,599, while the median household income for San Antonio and Bexar County is \$54,923 and \$62,169, respectively (see Figure 1 and Table 1).¹⁴ Furthermore, these ten zip codes have residents who are overwhelmingly people of color, with white people only representing somewhere between 4% and 16% of each zip code's total population (see Figure 1 and Table 1). **Black residents disproportionately receive FTAP holds, representing 14% of total current holds and only 7% of the San Antonio population.**¹⁵ OmniBase holds examined in the Dallas and Houston areas were also found to be more heavily concentrated in lower-income neighborhoods and disproportionately impacting people of color.¹⁶

Fig. 1: Bexar County Driver's License Holds and Median Household Income by Zip Code and City of San Antonio Council Districts¹⁷

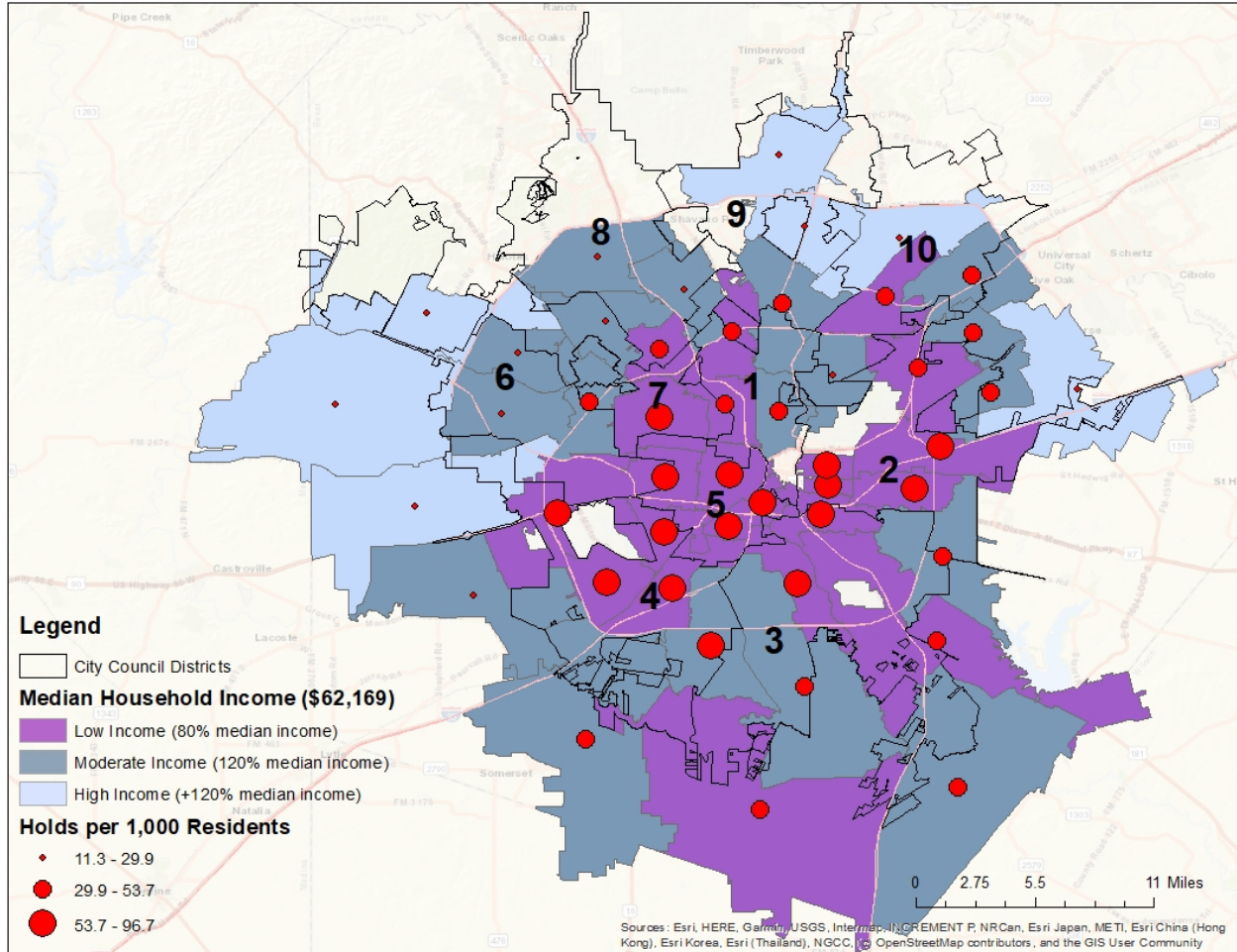


Table 1: Top Ten Zip Codes with the Highest Rate of OmniBase Holds from San Antonio Municipal Court

Zip Code	Population	Hold Rate per 1,000	Median Income	Latinx	Non-Latinx Black	Non-Latinx White
78202	10,390	96.73	\$ 34,542	62.60	20.10	16.50
78220	15,808	96.53	\$ 36,652	47.30	39.80	10.00
78203	6,034	95.29	\$ 34,533	80.00	11.00	5.80
78211	30,556	77.53	\$ 45,008	93.60	1.30	5.00
78210	34,005	75.64	\$ 44,279	83.50	3.20	11.40
78207	51,062	72.52	\$ 26,650	90.40	3.80	5.20
78214	23,077	66.04	\$ 36,633	88.80	0.50	9.80
78225	14,115	65.82	\$ 39,205	95.40	0.00	4.30
78226	7,109	64.71	\$ 28,247	92.50	1.50	4.90
78224	20,306	63.92	\$ 50,242	89.60	0.80	8.20

The FTAP Program Traps San Antonio Residents in a Cycle of Debt

The state's FTAP Program leads to people being unable to drive legally. Yet, many must continue to do so to provide for their families and themselves (e.g., driving to work, taking children to childcare and school, going to medical appointments, and so on). As a result, people who do drive with holds risk more tickets for driving without a valid license. Each new ticket can come with additional court debt, warrants, and renewal holds under the FTAP Program, trapping people in a cycle of debt.

OST's administration of the FTAP Program is also rife with inefficiencies. Attorneys representing drivers attempting to restore licenses report that information and holds may not be lifted in a timely manner, even after the court has directed OST to do so. Discrepancies between the data maintained by OST and that maintained by DPS make it difficult for drivers to determine the steps necessary to resolve their fines/fees and lift their holds.¹⁸ As court debt mounts and attorneys grapple with OST's inefficiencies, many people lose hope of ever getting their license back.

Holdings through the FTAP program are frequently issued for failure to appear in court or for failure to pay fines. However, it is essential to remember that "failure to appear" is *de facto* "failure to pay" in fine-only cases. License holders can pay a fine online or by mail before a court date to avoid appearing in court for a fine-only offense. FTAP holds arise because a resident has not paid the fine before a court date or after a court appearance during which a resident is convicted and ordered to pay a fine. Drivers often fail to appear in court because of an inability to pay or fear of the alternatives (i.e., fear of being arrested and taken to jail for failure to pay/appear) or due to other poverty-related factors, such as lack of transportation, lack of childcare, or the inability to miss work.¹⁹ Ultimately, punishing people for failing to pay drives them further into debt rather than helping them resolve their debts.

The FTAP Program Leads to Further Involvement with the Criminal Legal System Due to Poverty, Not Public Safety

The accumulation of multiple holds through this program is evident. Data from the San Antonio Municipal Court shows that the average person with an OmniBase hold has two holds from the San Antonio Municipal Court alone.²⁰ If these people have been stopped and cited in surrounding jurisdictions for driving with an invalid license, they may also have additional holds with those courts. **Furthermore, the current holds on licenses placed by the San Antonio Municipal Court have an average length of five years since they were imposed,²¹ illustrating that people need help to resolve them in a timely manner.**

A second Driving While License Invalid (DWLI) offense is a Class B jailable misdemeanor in Texas.²² Texans are being arrested and jailed for driving without a valid license, even if the only reason their license was invalid was that they were too poor to pay their fines and court costs. Most police departments across Texas do not have cite-and-release policies, and other jurisdictions do charge repeat DWLIs as Class B misdemeanors.²³ In 2022, over 20% of people prosecuted in Texas for a Class B Driving While License Invalid or Suspended were sentenced to jail, impacting more than 1,400 people across the state.²⁴ A driver may also receive a citation for Failure to Maintain Responsibility (FTMR) (i.e., driving without insurance) because it is difficult and expensive to obtain insurance without a valid license, as well as for Failure to Register a Vehicle (FRV) because nonpayment of fines also prevents drivers from registering their vehicles

as required by law.²⁵ Given the disproportionate burden that the OmniBase Program puts on people of color and the unjust risk it creates for license holds, arrest, and incarceration due to financial hardship, the program must be eliminated. Additionally, ending the program would significantly reduce the number of people without valid licenses and insurance on the road.

Participation in the FTAP Program Does Not Improve Collection Rates or Decrease the Use of Warrants

The main argument used to support the use of this Program is that it ensures the collection of fines/fees owed to a jurisdiction and as an alternative to issuing warrants for arrest. However, an analysis of San Antonio warrant data reveals that the San Antonio Municipal Court administers *capias* and Class C warrants at a rate of 1.43 and 1.42 times higher than the statewide average of courts that do not use the program.²⁶ **Additional analyses also show no significant difference in the amount collected per criminal case between municipal courts using the FTAP Program and those that do not.**²⁷ Both Harris County and the City of Austin voted to end their contracts with OmniBase Services of Texas in 2020; in neither place did court collections decrease.²⁸ Furthermore, from 2018 to 2021, the San Antonio Municipal Court collected an average of \$123 per case.²⁹ Meanwhile, the City of Fort Worth Municipal Court - a city of comparable size and demographic makeup that does not contract with OST - collected an average of \$135 per case over the same period.³⁰ This research shows no financial incentive for the courts to continue to use this program. Lifting these holds could save thousands of hours of law enforcement time, instead allowing police to focus on actual safety risks.³¹

Alternative Methods are Empirically Shown to Decrease Failure to Appear (FTA) Rates

According to OST, their completion rate is 33% over one year, meaning local courts across the state see a 67% failure to appear (FTA) rate.^{32 33} Several studies have tested the effectiveness of non-debt-based mechanisms in decreasing FTA rates. Researchers in Nebraska studied the effect of **text messages** on FTA rates, finding that iteration of sanctions for failure to appear produces the lowest FTA rate in comparison to no reminder, simple reminders, and reminders that include procedural justice sentiments.³⁴ This study also found that misdemeanor defendants who appear in court have more confidence in the courts than those who do not appear.³⁵ Additionally, New York City took a proactive approach to reduce FTA rates for low-level offenses by **redesigning court summons forms** to highlight pertinent information at the top of the forms.³⁶ The courts also sent text messages to fine holders to reiterate court information in the days leading up to hearings. Both measures were deemed successful, as they **reduced FTA rates by 36% and within a shorter time frame.**³⁷ The benefits of switching to these non-debt-based mechanisms are profound. One large municipal court found that the number of warrants avoided by implementing these alternatives was between 20,800 and 31,300 in one year alone.³⁸

The state of Texas has already taken steps to implement one of these best practices: text message reminders. In the 87th regular legislative session, the Texas legislature passed HB 4293, which created a statewide court text messaging reminder system that is supposed to be made available to the municipal courts for a small fee and at no cost to county courts.³⁹ In the 88th regular legislative session, \$2.2 million was allocated to the Office of Court Administration in the state budget to facilitate the implementation of this system. The agency has estimated that this system will be operational in 2025.⁴⁰

The Solution: San Antonio Should Cancel the City's Contract to Participate in the OmniBase/FTAP Program and Lift All Existing Holds

Given the counterproductive nature of debt-based driver's license restrictions, many municipalities and states have eliminated driving consequences for nonpayment of court debt.⁴¹ Until the Texas Legislature acts to repeal this program statewide, cities and counties must step in to protect their residents from the devastation it brings. Thus, the City of San Antonio should opt to terminate their contract with OST, cease participation in the state's FTAP, and lift all existing holds.

The City should instead implement research- and evidence-based policies that help people *quickly* resolve debt and avoid long-term financial distress. For instance, tickets from the San Antonio Police Department (1) do not spell out ways to revise or waive the amount they owe, (2) do not mention that people can avoid a Class C warrant if they come to court, and (3) they are often written in legal language that can be difficult to decipher by a layperson.⁴² Some evidenced-based alternatives include redesigning court summons forms,⁴³ using text messages or other reminders for court dates, prioritizing the tailoring of fines to one's income level, allowing for community service to be completed instead of payment, applying time served credit to the amount owed, and dismissing older cases and forgiving the associated debt. To ensure these alternatives are effective, the municipal court should plan to collect, analyze, and report on their use of these methods and the impact on their intended outcomes (e.g., failure to appear rates, clearance rates, frequency of alternative methods applied).

Debt-based driver license restriction programs, like the OmniBase Program, are counterproductive and harmful, leading to higher unemployment rates, lost wages, and fractured communities. It is illogical to erect barriers for people working due to unpaid court debt, as the practice perpetuates a vicious cycle of hardship. Ending license holds for court debt is a commonsense reform that has generated diverse support from bipartisan national leaders and organizations.⁴⁴ Recently, the cities of Dallas, Austin, and Harris County voted to cancel their OmniBase contracts, acknowledging the harm the program does to their most vulnerable residents. Other jurisdictions and courts do not participate in the program, and there is no positive correlation between a court's collections and participation.⁴⁵ **The San Antonio City Council should exit OmniBase and clear all outstanding holds, removing this hurdle to financial stability for their residents and an impediment to economic recovery for the city.**

For more information, please contact:

- Cole Meyer, MPAff
Policy Analyst, Criminal Justice Project
cmeyer@texasappleseed.org
- Jennifer Carreon, PhD
Director, Criminal Justice Project
jcarreon@texasappleseed.org

References & Endnotes

- ¹ Special thanks go out to Cole Meyer (author), Jennifer Carreon (co-author/editor), Farah Merchant (formatting), Jessi Stafford (data analysis), and John Laycock (data analysis) for the role they played in helping produce this brief. To find out more about our team, please visit our staff webpage, <https://www.texasappleseed.org/staff>
- ² Established pursuant to Chapter 706 of the Texas Transportation Code, the program is officially called the “Failure to Appear/Pay Program.” The Texas Department of Public Safety has contracted with a private vendor, OmniBase Services of Texas, to work with courts to administer the holds, leading to the program commonly referred to as the “OmniBase Program.”
- ³ See <https://www.texasfailuretoappear.com/>
- ⁴ Interlocal Cooperation Contract, Failure to Appear Program, City of San Antonio, Texas, and Texas Department of Public Safety, on file with authors.
- ⁵ According to the City of San Antonio’s fines and fees schedule, the lowest fixed speeding ticket is \$203 (posted speed limit, up to 10mph over) and the highest fixed speeding ticket is \$392 (unsafe speed, construction zone). (On a general note, however, a speeding ticket could exceed \$392 in some situations. A speeding ticket for speeding up to 10mph over in a school and construction zone is \$327, with each additional mile over the 10mph threshold being an additional \$10 fine. Thus, if someone was speeding 17mph over the speed limit in a school and construction zone, they would receive a ticket totaling \$397. This amount could be even higher if the defendant exceeds the speed limit by more than 17mph in this zone). If a ticket is not paid and a driver’s license hold is issued, the defendant must pay a \$10 reimbursement fee to lift this hold once the entirety of the debt is paid, per the Interlocal Cooperation Contract between the City of San Antonio and the Texas Department of Public Safety. Thus, the aggregate debt accumulated is as follows: lowest speeding ticket - \$203 (speeding ticket) + \$10 (hold fee) = \$213; highest: \$392 (speeding ticket) + \$10 (hold fee) = \$402. For more information on City of San Antonio fines and fees, see <https://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/files/court/fineschedule.pdf>.
- ⁶ Texas Transportation Code. § 706.005
- ⁷ Data obtained from the San Antonio Municipal Court and the Texas Department of Public Safety, on file with author.
- ⁸ Data obtained from the Texas Department of Public Safety, on file with the author. At the end of 2021, Bexar County JP courts had a total of 138,213 holds on record, in 2022 that # dropped to 41,414. Because the placement of holds can vary greatly throughout the year, it’s not uncommon to see a change in the number of holds from one year to the next, though this drop is indeed quite noticeable. The average between these two years is 89,813, thus the “nearly 90,000 holds” statistic. Additionally, Bexar County is home to 23 cities, a review of only four of those cities – Leon Valley (5,541 holds), Alamo Heights (4,073), Helotes (1,466), and Converse (2,582) – shows that tens of thousands of holds are being placed in the surrounding areas of San Antonio.
- ⁹ University of Texas-San Antonio generated a survey as part of the proposal from the City of San Antonio R & D League Rapid Call – Overcoming the Digital Divide, to gauge how the City can increase overall court user satisfaction and access to court.
- ¹⁰ Free to Drive: National Campaign to End Debt-Based License Restrictions (2022). Fines & Fees Justice Center. Retrieved from <https://finesandfeesjusticecenter.org/campaigns/national-drivers-license-suspension-campaign-free-to-drive/>
- ¹¹ Iris Dimmick, *Census Data: Almost 80% of San Antonioans Drive to Work Alone*, San Antonio Report (Dec. 11, 2017), available at <https://sanantonioreport.org/census-data-almost-80-of-san-antonians-drive-to-work-alone/>.
- ¹² John Pawasarat & Frank Stetzer, *The EARN (Early Assessment and Retention Network) Model for Effectively Targeting WIA and TANF Resources to Participants*, U. OF WIS. EMP. & TRAINING INST., 2007, available at <https://www4.uwm.edu/eti/2007/EARNModel.pdf>. See also Jon A. Carnegie & Alan M. Voorhees, Transportation Center at Rutgers, State Univ. of New Jersey, *Driver’s License Suspensions, Impacts & Fairness* (2007), available at <https://www.nj.gov/transportation/business/research/reports/FHWA-NJ-2007-020-V1.pdf> (Large study of drivers with suspended licenses in New Jersey found that 42% lost their jobs when their license was suspended, and the impact was even greater on drivers with household incomes below \$30,000: 64% of these drivers lost their jobs and 51% could not find another job).
- ¹³ Texas Appleseed & Texas Fair Defense Project, *Driven by Debt Dallas*. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.texasappleseed.org/sites/default/files/DrivenBy%20Debt%20Dallas.pdf>; see also Texas Appleseed & Texas Fair Defense Project, *Driven by Debt Houston*. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.texasappleseed.org/sites/default/files/DrivenByDebt-Houston-July2020.pdf>.
- ¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2021 5-Year Estimates.
- ¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, Quick Facts San Antonio city, Texas. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sanantoniocitytexas,US/PST045222>.
- ¹⁶ Texas Appleseed & Texas Fair Defense Project, *Driven by Debt Houston*. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.texasappleseed.org/sites/default/files/DrivenByDebt-Houston-July2020.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ Holds from the San Antonio Municipal Court are the only holds represented in this data. The holds impact people not just in San Antonio, but throughout Bexar County. Therefore, the map illustrates all holds placed by the San

Antonio Municipal Court throughout Bexar County. Holds placed by the San Antonio Municipal Courts on residents not living in Bexar County (representing 17% of all holds) are not represented on this map.

¹⁸ Both the Department of Public Safety and OmniBase maintain different systems to track driver's license holds. Unfortunately, there is a consistent lack of communication between these entities, resulting in uneven information on aggregate numbers of license holds *and* individuals' hold statuses. For instance, an individual may have squared away ALL their fines and fees (including the \$10 hold fee). However, that change may only be reflected on the court's end and never relayed to OmniBase for their data system. This lack of communication causes a duplication of services on DPS' end, as the work required to verify hold lifts becomes a task placed on DPS operators, rather than the vendor who is contracted to operate the program.

¹⁹ One North Carolina study found that poverty was predictive of not just failure to pay but also failure to appear in traffic cases, suggesting those who do not appear fail to do so for reasons related to poverty, like inability to take time off work and no transportation to court. William E. Crozier & Brandon L. Garrett, *Driven to Failure: An Empirical Analysis of Driver's License Suspensions in North Carolina*, 69 *Duke L. J.* 1585 (Apr. 2020).

²⁰ Data obtained from the San Antonio Municipal Court, on file with author.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Texas Transportation Code § 521.457 (f)

²³ Texas Applesseed, HB 410 Fact Sheet. (2023). Retrieved from:

[https://www.texasapplesseed.org/sites/default/files/TACJ_88th%20Fact%20Sheet_HB410%20\(March%202023\)_0.pdf](https://www.texasapplesseed.org/sites/default/files/TACJ_88th%20Fact%20Sheet_HB410%20(March%202023)_0.pdf)

; See also Texas Applesseed, *Cite and Release in Texas*. (2022). Retrieved from:

https://www.texasapplesseed.org/sites/default/files/CiteandReleaseReport_updatefor_web_23.pdf. (In a statewide analysis conducted by Texas Applesseed, we found that 28% of police departments have cite and release policies while 61% do not. The remainder of police departments indicate “deferring to state law,” or “officer discretion” when making decisions to arrest on a citation-eligible charge. Additionally, in a comprehensive examination of 8 large municipal jurisdictions, Texas Applesseed found that DWLI's make up 17% of citation-eligible arrests in these municipalities.)

²⁴ Texas Office of Court Administration, *County-Level Courts Misdemeanor Case Activity Detail* (2022). Retrieved from https://card.txcourts.gov/oca_ReportViewer.aspx?ReportName=County-Level_Courts/CL_Misdemeanor_Activity_Detail_N.rpt&ddlFromMonth=1&ddlFromYear=2022&txtFromMonthField=@FromMonth&txtFromYearField=@FromYear&ddlToMonth=12&ddlToYear=2022&txtToMonthField=@ToMonth&txtToYearField=@ToYear&ddlCountyPostBack=0&txtCountyPostBackField=@CountyID&ddlCourtAfterPostBack=0&txtCourtAfterPostBackField=@CourtID&chkAggregateMonthlyReport=0&export=1706.

²⁵ Texas Transportation Code § 601.191, § 601.195, § 601.231, & § 502.045.

²⁶ 2021 Capias and Class C warrant data collected from the Office of Court Administration, datasets on file with author. (These differences were not found to be statistically significant.)

²⁷ Texas Applesseed & Texas Fair Defense Project, *Driven by Debt: The Failure of the OmniBase Program*. (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.texasapplesseed.org/sites/default/files/OmniBaseRevenueReport-Aug11-Final.pdf>.

²⁸ *Ibid.* The Graphs on page 4 of the *Driven by Debt* report show that revenue per criminal case disposed increased slightly after eliminating the contract with OmniBase. Retrieved from <https://www.texasapplesseed.org/sites/default/files/OmniBaseRevenueReport-Aug11-Final.pdf>.

²⁹ 2018-2021 Municipal court data collected from the Office of Court Administration, datasets on file with the author.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ One Washington state amnesty program for drivers with suspended licenses saved 4,500 hours of patrol officers' time (see <https://www.acslaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/License-Suspension-Issue-Brief-Final.pdf>). A Florida study estimated that adjudicating cases involving debt-based license suspensions cost Florida state courts more than \$40 million a year, resulting in a “costly debtor's prison” (see <https://finesandfeesjusticecenter.org/content/uploads/2019/11/florida-fines-fees-drivers-license-suspension-driving-on-empty.pdf>).

³² Statistics were obtained from a memo to the Texas House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety from Alcorta Law Firm PLLC, representing OmniBase Services of Texas. Note on file with the author.

³³ *Ibid.* According to OST, their completion rate sits at 33% over a one-to-two-year period. The failure to appear rate (67%) was calculated by subtracting the completion rate (33%) from the total cases (100%).

³⁴ Bornstein, B. H., Tomkins, A. J., Neeley, E. M., Herian, M. N., & Hamm, J. A. (2013). Reducing courts' failure-to-appear rate by written reminders. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 19(1), 70.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Cooke, B., Dip, B. Z., Fishbane, A., Hayes, J., Ouss, A., & Shah, A. (2018) Using behavioral science to improve criminal justice outcomes. *University of Chicago Crime Lab Report*.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ HB 4293 was passed during Texas' 87th Regular Legislative Session—enrolled bill text retrieved from <https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/87R/billtext/pdf/HB04293F.pdf#navpanes=0>.

⁴⁰ HB 1 was passed during Texas' 88th Regular Legislative Session. Allocation #13 on page 570 (or IV-28) of this bill displays the funding allocation for the Office of Court Administration. Enrolled bill text retrieved from

<https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/88R/billtext/pdf/HB00001F.pdf#navpanes=0>; see also testimony from Megan Lavoie, Director of the Office of Court Administration in a February 23, 2023 Texas House Appropriations Subcommittee (Articles I, II, IV) hearing, showcasing support for court text message reminder systems and providing cost-estimates on the program's construction and maintenance. Retrieved from

https://tlchouse.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=78&clip_id=23854 (Director LaVoie's remarks on the state's court text message reminder program can be found at timestamp 1:13:30-1:14:40).

⁴¹ Free to Drive: National Campaign to End Debt-Based License Restrictions (2022). Fines & Fees Justice Center. Retrieved from <https://finesandfeesjusticecenter.org/campaigns/national-drivers-license-suspension-campaign-free-to-drive/>

⁴² To San Antonio's credit, there is information on the city's court programs to resolve tickets on their website; see <https://www.sa.gov/Directory/Departments/Court/Appearances-Procedures/Programs>. However, Texas Appleseed recommends that these programs be listed on tickets issued to drivers during traffic stops. A sample citation for the City of San Antonio on file with the author was received via PIR on 11/19/2023.

⁴³ Here is an example of a redesigned summons form that Harris County has created in partnership with Ideas42: https://www.ideas42.org/project/increasing-harris-county-court-appearances-by-adapting-tested-solutions/?utm_source=Safety+%26+Justice+%7C+ideas42&utm_campaign=208a2462aa-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_11_02_02_00&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-208a2462aa-%5BBLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=208a2462aa&mc_eid=9adee68691

⁴⁴ The conservative Texas Public Policy Foundation discusses its opposition to the OmniBase Program on its website at <https://www.texaspolicy.com/court-fees-and-fines-unjustly-burden-debtors/>. See also ALEC Resolution In Support of Limiting Driver's License Suspensions to Violations Involving Dangerous Driving, available at <https://www.alec.org/model-policy/resolution-in-support-of-limiting-drivers-license-suspensions-to-violations-that-involve-dangerous-driving/>. For a list of diverse organizations supportive of ending driver's license suspensions and driving-related consequences for court debt, visit the Free to Drive Coalition's website at <https://www.freetodrive.org/about/#page-content> (last visited Sept. 7, 2023).

⁴⁵ For more information, see our report, *Driven By Debt: Failure of the OmniBase Program* (2021), available at <https://www.texasappleseed.org/sites/default/files/OmniBaseRevenueReport-Aug11-Final.pdf>