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October 7, 2026

The Honorable Bryan Hughes, Chair
Senate Committee on State Affairs
Texas Senate
P.O. Box 12068, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

By email to Committee Clerk David Lee, David.Lee@senate.texas.gov

Re: Written submission on the interim charges Protecting Texas Families and Protecting the Integrity of the Judiciary

Dear Chairman Hughes and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully submit the enclosed written submission and research report, *The Best Interest of the Child: The Evidence, the Law, and the Case for Rebuilding the Texas Family Code*, for the Committee's record on two interim charges heard September 14 and 15, 2026, and for its consideration in preparing the interim report to the 90th Legislature.

On the charge Protecting Texas Families, the report identifies where Texas divorce and custody proceedings produce unpredictable timelines, unnecessary delays, and repetitive child evaluations, and why. Chapters 3, 4, and 6 trace each problem to the text of the Family Code and the court rules. Chapter 12 recommends a first group of bills that answer them: written findings and a recorded hearing in every ruling on a child's custody; prompt review of temporary orders; the elected judge for every contested decision about a parent's right; a fixed, blind, validated evaluation protocol that replaces the open-ended evaluation and requires a good-cause finding before any second evaluation; and an equal-parenting presumption for fit, willing, and able parents, rebuttable by clear and convincing evidence.

On the charge Protecting the Integrity of the Judiciary, Chapter 9 examines what the Rules of Judicial Education and Government Code Section 22.110 require of family-law programs that earn judicial credit, and recommends one public disclosure and evidence standard for every sponsor and every presenter. That standard reaches presentations of the kind I have given and those of my allies, and the report applies it to them without exception.

The report states the source and strength of the evidence for each finding. Its Executive Summary can be read on its own. A companion document, also enclosed, gives drafting specifications for the recommended bills and contains no bill text. My interests, including my commercial work with attachment measures and my civic activity, are disclosed in full in the report's Statement of Interest. The report is self-funded.

I ask that the report be made part of the Committee's record on both charges. If the Committee requires paper copies or another format, I will provide them. I would welcome the opportunity to answer any question from the Committee or its staff.

Respectfully,

L. Brooks McKenzie, PhD

Enclosures: The Best Interest of the Child (TCMF_MEMO_BEST_INTEREST_REPORT_READY.doc);
Drafting Specifications for the First Group of Model Bills
(TCMF_MEMO_MODEL_BILL_SPECS_READY.doc)

Transmittal email

To: David.Lee@senate.texas.gov

Bcc: lbmtcu+tcmf@gmail.com

Subject: Written submission for the record: Protecting Texas Families and Protecting the Integrity of the Judiciary

Attachments: this letter; TCMF_MEMO_BEST_INTEREST_REPORT_READY.doc;
TCMF_MEMO_MODEL_BILL_SPECS_READY.doc

Mr. Lee,

Attached is my letter to Chairman Hughes and the Committee on State Affairs, with a written submission and research report for the Committee's record on the interim charges Protecting Texas Families and Protecting the Integrity of the Judiciary, heard September 14 and 15, 2026. Please file it with the Committee's record on both charges and confirm receipt. If the Committee needs paper copies or another format, tell me how many and where, and I will provide them.

Thank you,

L. Brooks McKenzie, PhD

lbmtcu@gmail.com