

O'Neil Attorneys Newsletter

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## O'Neil Attorneys News...

June 13, 2011

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### Where We Stand as the Legislature Ends

by Gary Nickelson

The 2011 Regular Session of the Texas Legislature expired at midnight May 30th. Whew! That was a lot of work by a lot of people.

It's great that 10 of the 11 bills of the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Texas have passed both houses. Of those, 6 have already been signed into law by Governor Rick Perry. Here are those bills and their effective dates:

- [HB 841](#) - State agency name updated to DFPS - effective immediately

- [HB 905](#) - Admissibility of child hearsay - effective September 1, 2011
- [HB 906](#) - Indigent client appeals in SAPCRs - effective September 1, 2011
- [HB 1404](#) - Military deployments and kids - effective September 1, 2011
- [SB 785](#) - [Mistaken paternity](#) - effective May 12, 2011
- [SB 820](#) - Possession of very young kids - effective September 1, 2011

Regarding the other four bills, the Governor has until midnight June 19th to sign, veto or allow to them to go into effect without his signature. Those bills and their effective dates - if they become law - are:

- [HB 901](#) - [Spousal maintenance](#) update - effective September 1, 2011
- [HB 908](#) - Remedy for fraud on the community - effective September 1, 2011
- [SB 789](#) - Extended protective orders - effective September 1, 2011
- [SB 819](#) - Dating/family violence protective orders - effective September 1, 2011

We regret losing HB 910, which allows single people to use gestational agreements. We made headway again, but we're just not there - yet.

The Texas Family Law Foundation will continue to report to Texas Family Lawyers on the legislative session, as long as there are bills alive down in Austin.

### From our Blog...

## Does gridlock increase Dallas divorce rates?

[Are you being driven to divorce. asks CBS 11?](#) A study [commissioned in Sweden](#) found that the risk of divorce goes up by 40% for spouses with commutes over 45 minutes. "To be able to commute to work can be a positive thing because it means you don't have to uproot your family with every career move, but it can also be a strain on your relationship," says study author Erika Sandow. Commuting was found to be harder for women than men, and the risk of divorce is usually the highest during the first few years of commuting.

### Attorney Spotlight



Another TV interview for Michelle May O'Neil! See the video clip from CBS 11 on [Gridlock vs. Wedlock](#).

[Dallas divorce attorneys](#) say there are, naturally, other factors to consider when looking into the break down of marriage relationships. The economy and finances have been straining marriages for years. Long commutes may add to the stress a spouse feels during the day and takes time away from the family spent driving.

So, what can be done to prevent the commute from killing your marriage? Communication is essential to the health of any relationship. Making special time for each other can also help bridge the gap.

[Carol Cavazos](#) and I discussed this study in the interview I did with her for this story on CBS 11:

[Click to view the Video](#)

### Testimonials

"The May Firm (O'Neil Attorneys) goes above and beyond with their support and Team effort in such a tremendous time of upheaval in one's life. Michelle May O'Neil has a very strong grip on interpreting the law. She advocates for her client to receive a just, fair outcome without stooping to a level of mud-slinging or degrading the other side. Her presence in the courtroom is one of strength and skill. She is given respect, justly deserved, the minute she enters the courtroom."

~A.C.

## About Our Law Firm

At the Texas family law firm of [O'Neil Attorneys](#), we have one purpose in mind: providing men and women with compassionate and relentless advocacy from beginning to end in all [practice areas](#) of family law litigation and family law appeals in Texas courts. Whether defeating opponents in the courtroom or creating new law at the appellate level, we are committed to providing superior results to all of our clients.

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