

CHAPTER 664

S.B. No. 531

AN ACT

relating to precedence for trial of certain suits affecting the parent-child relationship.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:

SECTION 1. Section 11.14, Family Code, is amended by adding Subsections (h) and (i) to read as follows:

(h) In any suit brought by a governmental entity or by an authorized agency seeking termination of the parent-child relationship or seeking termination of the rights of an alleged or probable father, after a hearing the court shall grant a motion for a preferential setting for a final hearing on the merits filed by a party to the suit or by the attorney or guardian ad litem for the child and shall give precedence to that hearing over other civil cases if:

(1) the termination is sought to free the child for adoption; and

(2) discovery has been completed or sufficient time has elapsed since the filing of the suit for the completion of all necessary and reasonable discovery if diligently pursued.

(i) In any suit affecting the parent-child relationship, after a hearing the court may grant a motion for a preferential setting for a final hearing on the merits filed by a party or by the attorney or guardian ad litem for the child and may give precedence to that hearing over other civil cases if the court finds that the delay created by ordinary scheduling practices will unreasonably affect the best interest of the child.

SECTION 2. The importance of this legislation and the crowded condition of the calendars in both houses create an emergency and an imperative public necessity that the

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constitutional rule requiring bills to be read on three several days in each house be suspended, and this rule is hereby suspended, and that this Act take effect and be in force from and after its passage, and it is so enacted.

Passed the Senate on April 6, 1987, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 0. Passed the House on May 21, 1987, by a non-record vote.

Approved June 19, 1987.

Effective Aug. 31, 1987, 90 days after date of adjournment.