

By: Farrar

H.B. No. 703

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to authorizing a revocable deed that transfers real property at the transferor's death.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subtitle C, Title 2, Estates Code, is amended by adding Chapter 114 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 114. TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 114.001. SHORT TITLE. This chapter may be cited as the Texas Real Property Transfer on Death Act.

Sec. 114.002. DEFINITIONS. (a) In this chapter:

(1) "Beneficiary" means a person who receives real property under a transfer on death deed.

(2) "Designated beneficiary" means a person designated to receive real property in a transfer on death deed.

(3) "Joint owner with right of survivorship" or "joint owner" means an individual who owns real property concurrently with one or more other individuals with a right of survivorship. The term does not include a tenant in common or an owner of community property with or without a right of survivorship.

(4) "Person" has the meaning assigned by Section 311.005, Government Code.

(5) "Real property" means an interest in real property located in this state.

1           (6) "Transfer on death deed" means a deed authorized  
2 under this chapter.

3           (7) "Transferor" means an individual who makes a  
4 transfer on death deed.

5           (b) In this chapter, the terms "cancel" and "revoke" are  
6 synonymous.

7           Sec. 114.003. APPLICABILITY. This chapter applies to a  
8 transfer on death deed made before, on, or after September 1, 2015,  
9 by a transferor who dies on or after September 1, 2015.

10          Sec. 114.004. NONEXCLUSIVITY. This chapter does not affect  
11 any method of transferring real property otherwise permitted under  
12 the laws of this state.

13          Sec. 114.005. UNIFORMITY OF APPLICATION AND CONSTRUCTION.  
14 In applying and construing this chapter, consideration must be  
15 given to the need to promote uniformity of the law with respect to  
16 the subject matter of this chapter among states that enact a law  
17 similar to this chapter.

18          Sec. 114.006. RELATION TO ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES IN GLOBAL  
19 AND NATIONAL COMMERCE ACT. This chapter modifies, limits, and  
20 supersedes the federal Electronic Signatures in Global and National  
21 Commerce Act (15 U.S.C. Section 7001 et seq.), except that this  
22 chapter does not modify, limit, or supersede Section 101(c) of that  
23 Act (15 U.S.C. Section 7001(c)) or authorize electronic delivery of  
24 any of the notices described in Section 103(b) of that Act (15  
25 U.S.C. Section 7003(b)).

SUBCHAPTER B. AUTHORIZATION, EXECUTION, AND REVOCATION OF TRANSFER  
ON DEATH DEED

Sec. 114.051. TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED AUTHORIZED. An individual may transfer the individual's interest in real property to one or more beneficiaries effective at the transferor's death by a transfer on death deed.

Sec. 114.052. TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED REVOCABLE. A transfer on death deed is revocable regardless of whether the deed or another instrument contains a contrary provision.

Sec. 114.053. TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED NONTESTAMENTARY. A transfer on death deed is a nontestamentary instrument.

Sec. 114.054. CAPACITY OF TRANSFEROR. The capacity required to make or revoke a transfer on death deed is the same as the capacity required to make a contract.

Sec. 114.055. REQUIREMENTS. To be effective, a transfer on death deed must:

(1) except as otherwise provided in Subdivision (2), contain the essential elements and formalities of a recordable deed;

(2) state that the transfer of an interest in real property to the designated beneficiary is to occur at the transferor's death; and

(3) be recorded before the transferor's death in the deed records in the county clerk's office of the county where the real property is located.

Sec. 114.056. NOTICE, DELIVERY, ACCEPTANCE, OR CONSIDERATION NOT REQUIRED. A transfer on death deed is effective

without:

(1) notice or delivery to or acceptance by the designated beneficiary during the transferor's life; or

(2) consideration.

Sec. 114.057. REVOCATION BY CERTAIN INSTRUMENTS; EFFECT OF WILL OR MARRIAGE DISSOLUTION. (a) Subject to Subsections (d) and (e), an instrument is effective to revoke a recorded transfer on death deed, or any part of it, if the instrument:

(1) is one of the following:

(A) a subsequent transfer on death deed that revokes the preceding transfer on death deed or part of the deed expressly or by inconsistency; or

(B) except as provided by Subsection (b), an instrument of revocation that expressly revokes the transfer on death deed or part of the deed;

(2) is acknowledged by the transferor after the acknowledgment of the deed being revoked; and

(3) is recorded before the transferor's death in the deed records in the county clerk's office of the county where the deed being revoked is recorded.

(b) A will may not revoke or supersede a transfer on death deed.

(c) If a marriage between the transferor and a designated beneficiary is dissolved after a transfer on death deed is recorded, a final judgment of the court dissolving the marriage operates to revoke the transfer on death deed as to that designated beneficiary if notice of the judgment is recorded before the

1 transferor's death in the deed records in the county clerk's office  
2 of the county where the deed is recorded, notwithstanding Section  
3 111.052.

4 (d) If a transfer on death deed is made by more than one  
5 transferor, revocation by a transferor does not affect the deed as  
6 to the interest of another transferor who does not make that  
7 revocation.

8 (e) A transfer on death deed made by joint owners with right  
9 of survivorship is revoked only if it is revoked by all of the  
10 living joint owners.

11 (f) This section does not limit the effect of an inter vivos  
12 transfer of the real property.

13 SUBCHAPTER C. EFFECT OF TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED; LIABILITY OF  
14 TRANSFERRED PROPERTY FOR CREDITORS' CLAIMS

15 Sec. 114.101. EFFECT OF TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED DURING  
16 TRANSFEROR'S LIFE. During a transferor's life, a transfer on death  
17 deed does not:

18 (1) affect an interest or right of the transferor or  
19 any other owner, including:

20 (A) the right to transfer or encumber the real  
21 property that is the subject of the deed;

22 (B) homestead rights in the real property, if  
23 applicable; and

24 (C) ad valorem tax exemptions, including  
25 exemptions for residence homestead, persons 65 years of age or  
26 older, persons with disabilities, and veterans;

27 (2) affect an interest or right of a transferee of the

real property that is the subject of the deed, even if the transferee has actual or constructive notice of the deed;

(3) affect an interest or right of a secured or unsecured creditor or future creditor of the transferor, even if the creditor has actual or constructive notice of the deed;

(4) affect the transferor's or designated beneficiary's eligibility for any form of public assistance, subject to applicable federal law;

(5) constitute a transfer triggering a "due on sale" or similar clause;

(6) invoke statutory real estate notice or disclosure requirements;

(7) create a legal or equitable interest in favor of the designated beneficiary; or

(8) subject the real property to claims or process of a creditor of the designated beneficiary.

Sec. 114.102. TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED VOID ON CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY SUBJECT OF DEED. If a transferor during the transferor's lifetime conveys to any person all of the transferor's interest in real property that is the subject of a transfer on death deed, the transfer on death deed is void as to that interest in real property.

Sec. 114.103. EFFECT OF TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED AT TRANSFEROR'S DEATH. (a) Except as otherwise provided in the transfer on death deed, this section, or any other statute or the common law of this state governing a decedent's estate, on the death of the transferor, the following rules apply to an interest in real property that is the subject of a transfer on death deed and owned

1 by the transferor at death:

2 (1) if the designated beneficiary survives the  
3 transferor by 120 hours, the interest in the real property is  
4 transferred to the designated beneficiary in accordance with the  
5 deed;

6 (2) the interest of a designated beneficiary that  
7 fails to survive the transferor by 120 hours lapses,  
8 notwithstanding Section [111.052](#);

9 (3) subject to Subdivision (4), concurrent interests  
10 are transferred to the beneficiaries in equal and undivided shares  
11 with no right of survivorship; and

12 (4) notwithstanding Subdivision (2), if the  
13 transferor has identified two or more designated beneficiaries to  
14 receive concurrent interests in the real property, the share of a  
15 designated beneficiary who predeceases the transferor lapses and is  
16 subject to and passes in accordance with Subchapter D, Chapter 255,  
17 as if the transfer on death were a devise made in a will.

18 (b) If a transferor is a joint owner with right of  
19 survivorship who is survived by one or more other joint owners, the  
20 real property that is the subject of the transfer on death deed  
21 belongs to the surviving joint owner or owners. If a transferor is  
22 a joint owner with right of survivorship who is the last surviving  
23 joint owner, the transfer on death deed is effective.

24 (c) If a transfer on death deed is made by two or more  
25 transferors who are joint owners with right of survivorship, the  
26 last surviving joint owner may revoke the transfer on death deed  
27 subject to Section [114.057](#).

1        (d) A transfer on death deed transfers real property without  
2 covenant or warranty of title even if the deed contains a contrary  
3 provision.

4        Sec. 114.104. TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED PROPERTY SUBJECT TO  
5 LIENS AND ENCUMBRANCES AT TRANSFEROR'S DEATH; CREDITORS' CLAIMS.

6        (a) Subject to Section 13.001, Property Code, a beneficiary takes  
7 the real property subject to all conveyances, encumbrances,  
8 assignments, contracts, mortgages, liens, and other interests to  
9 which the real property is subject at the transferor's death. For  
10 purposes of this subsection and Section 13.001, Property Code, the  
11 recording of the transfer on death deed is considered to have  
12 occurred at the transferor's death.

13        (b) If a personal representative has been appointed for the  
14 transferor's estate, an administration of the estate has been  
15 opened, and the real property transferring under a transfer on  
16 death deed is subject to a lien or security interest, including a  
17 deed of trust or mortgage, the personal representative shall give  
18 notice to the creditor of the transferor as the personal  
19 representative would any other secured creditor under Section  
20 308.053. The creditor shall then make an election under Section  
21 355.151 in the period prescribed by Section 355.152 to have the  
22 claim treated as a matured secured claim or a preferred debt and  
23 lien claim, and the claim is subject to the claims procedures  
24 prescribed by this section.

25        (c) If the secured creditor elects to have the claim treated  
26 as a preferred debt and lien claim, Sections 355.154 and 355.155  
27 apply as if the transfer on death were a devise made in a will, and



the creditor may not pursue any other claims or remedies for any deficiency against the transferor's estate.

(d) If the secured creditor elects to have the claim treated as a matured secured claim, Section 355.153 applies as if the transfer on death were a devise made in a will, and the claim is subject to the procedural provisions of this title governing creditor claims.

Sec. 114.105. DISCLAIMER. A designated beneficiary may disclaim all or part of the designated beneficiary's interest as provided by Chapter 122.

Sec. 114.106. LIABILITY FOR CREDITOR CLAIMS AND FAMILY ALLOWANCES. (a) To the extent the transferor's estate is insufficient to satisfy a claim against the estate, expenses of administration, any estate tax owed by the estate, or a family allowance to a surviving spouse, minor children, or incapacitated adult children, the personal representative may enforce that liability against real property transferred at the transferor's death by a transfer on death deed to the same extent the personal representative could enforce that liability if the real property were part of the probate estate.

(b) If a personal representative does not commence a proceeding to enforce a liability under Subsection (a) on or before the 90th day after the date the representative receives a demand for payment, a proceeding to enforce the liability may be brought by a creditor, a distributee of the estate, a surviving spouse of the decedent, a guardian or other appropriate person on behalf of a minor child or adult incapacitated child of the decedent, or any

1 taxing authority.

2 (c) If more than one real property interest is transferred  
3 by one or more transfer on death deeds or if there are other  
4 nonprobate assets of the transferor that may be liable for the  
5 claims, expenses, and other payments specified in Subsection (a),  
6 the liability for those claims, expenses, and other payments may be  
7 apportioned among those real property interests and other assets in  
8 proportion to their net values at the transferor's death.

9 (d) A proceeding to enforce liability under this section  
10 must be commenced not later than the second anniversary of the  
11 transferor's death, except for any rights arising under Section  
12 114.104(d).

13 (e) In connection with any proceeding brought under this  
14 section, a court may award costs and reasonable and necessary  
15 attorney's fees in amounts the court considers equitable and just.

16 SUBCHAPTER D. FORMS FOR TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED

17 Sec. 114.151. OPTIONAL FORM FOR TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED. The  
18 following form may be used to create a transfer on death deed.

19 REVOCABLE TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED

20 NOTICE OF CONFIDENTIALITY RIGHTS: IF YOU ARE A NATURAL PERSON, YOU  
21 MAY REMOVE OR STRIKE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FROM THIS  
22 INSTRUMENT BEFORE IT IS FILED FOR RECORD IN THE PUBLIC RECORDS:  
23 YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OR YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER.

24 IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OWNER: You should carefully read all the  
25 information included in the instructions to this form. You may want  
26 to consult a lawyer before using this form.

27 MUST RECORD DEED: Before your death, this deed must be recorded with

the county clerk where the property is located, or it will not be effective.

1. Owner (Transferor) Making this Deed:

Printed name

Mailing address

## 2. Legal Description of the Property:

3. Address of the Property (if any) (include county):

4. Primary Beneficiary (Transferee) or Beneficiaries  
(Transferees)

I designate the following beneficiary or beneficiaries, if  
the beneficiary survives me:

Printed name

Mailing address

## 5. Alternate Beneficiary or Beneficiaries (Optional)

If no primary beneficiary survives me, I designate the  
following alternate beneficiary or beneficiaries:

Printed name

Mailing address

## 6. Transfer on Death

At my death, I convey to the primary beneficiary or  
beneficiaries my interest in the property, to have and hold  
forever. If at my death I am not survived by any primary  
beneficiary, I grant and convey to the alternate beneficiary or  
beneficiaries, if designated, my interest in the property, to have  
and hold forever. If the primary and alternate beneficiaries do not

survive me, this transfer on death deed shall be deemed canceled by  
me.

7. Signature of Owner Making this Deed:

Signature

Date

BELOW LINE FOR NOTARY ONLY

## Acknowledgement

STATE OF \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

This instrument was acknowledged before me on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_,

by \_\_\_\_\_.

Notary Public, State of

After recording, return to:

(insert name and mailing address)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED

DO NOT RECORD THESE INSTRUCTIONS

## Instructions for Completing the Form

1. Owner (Transferor) Making this Deed: Enter your first, middle  
(if any), and last name here, along with your mailing address.

2. Legal Description of the Property: Enter the formal legal description of the property. This information is different from the mailing and physical address for the property and is necessary to

1 complete the form. To find this information, look on the deed you  
2 received when you became an owner of the property. This information  
3 may also be available in the office of the county clerk for the  
4 county where the property is located. Do NOT use your tax bill to  
5 find this information. If you are not absolutely sure, consult a  
6 lawyer.

7 3. Address of the Property: Enter the physical address of the  
8 property.

9 4. Primary Beneficiary or Beneficiaries: Enter the first and last  
10 name of each person you want to get the property when you die. If you  
11 are married and want your spouse to get the property when you die,  
12 enter your spouse's first and last name (even if you and your spouse  
13 own the property together).

14 5. Alternate Beneficiary or Beneficiaries: Enter the first and  
15 last name of each person you want to get the property if no primary  
16 beneficiary survives you.

17 6. Transfer on Death: No action needed.

18 7. Signature of Owner: Do not sign your name or enter the date  
19 until you are before a notary.

20 8. Acknowledgement: This deed must be signed before a notary. The  
21 notary will fill out this section of the deed.

22 Sec. 114.152. OPTIONAL FORM OF REVOCATION. The following  
23 form may be used to create an instrument of revocation under this  
24 chapter.

25 CANCELLATION OF TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED

26 IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OWNER: You should carefully read all the  
27 information included in the instructions to this form. You may want

1 to consult a lawyer before using this form.

2 MUST RECORD FORM: Before your death, this cancellation form must be  
3 recorded with the county clerk where the property is located, or it  
4 will not be effective. This cancellation is effective only as to the  
5 interests in the property of owners who sign this cancellation  
6 form.

7 1. Owner (Transferor) Making this Cancellation:

8 \_\_\_\_\_  
9 Printed name                      Mailing address

10 2. Legal Description of the Property:

11 \_\_\_\_\_

12 3. Address of the Property (if any) (include county):

13 \_\_\_\_\_

14 4. Cancellation

15 I cancel all my previous transfers of this property by  
16 transfer on death deed.

17 5. Signature of Owner (Transferor) Making this Cancellation:

18 \_\_\_\_\_  
19 Signature                      Date

20 BELOW LINE FOR NOTARY ONLY

21 \_\_\_\_\_

22 Acknowledgement

23 STATE OF \_\_\_\_\_

24 COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

25 This instrument was acknowledged before me on the \_\_\_\_ day of

26 \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_,

27 by \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public, State of \_\_\_\_\_

After recording, return to:

(insert name and mailing address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANCELING A TRANSFER ON DEATH (TOD) DEED

DO NOT RECORD THESE INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions for Completing the Form

1. Owner (Transferor) Making this Cancellation: Enter your first, middle (if any), and last name here, along with your mailing address.

2. Legal Description of the Property: Enter the formal legal description of the property. This information is different from the mailing and physical address for the property and is necessary to complete the form. To find this information, look on the deed you received when you became an owner of the property. This information may also be available in the office of the county clerk for the county where the property is located. Do NOT use your tax bill to find this information. If you are not absolutely sure, consult a lawyer.

3. Address of the Property: Enter the physical address of the property.

4. Cancellation: No action needed.

5. Signature of Owner: Do not sign your name or enter the date until you are before a notary.

6. Acknowledgement: This cancellation form must be signed before a

1 notary. The notary will fill out this section of the form.

2 SECTION 2. Section 22.027(b), Estates Code, is amended to  
3 read as follows:

4 (b) Except as otherwise provided by this code, the ~~[The]~~  
5 definition of "person" assigned by Section 311.005, Government  
6 Code, does not apply to any provision in this code.

7 SECTION 3. Section 122.001(1), Estates Code, is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 (1) "Beneficiary" includes a person who would have  
10 been entitled, if the person had not made a disclaimer, to receive  
11 property as a result of the death of another person:

12 (A) by inheritance;

13 (B) under a will;

14 (C) by an agreement between spouses for community  
15 property with a right of survivorship;

16 (D) by a joint tenancy with a right of  
17 survivorship;

18 (E) by a survivorship agreement, account, or  
19 interest in which the interest of the decedent passes to a surviving  
20 beneficiary;

21 (F) by an insurance, annuity, endowment,  
22 employment, deferred compensation, or other contract or  
23 arrangement; ~~[or]~~

24 (G) under a pension, profit sharing, thrift,  
25 stock bonus, life insurance, survivor income, incentive, or other  
26 plan or program providing retirement, welfare, or fringe benefits  
27 with respect to an employee or a self-employed individual; or



1                    (H) by a transfer on death deed.

2            SECTION 4.    This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.