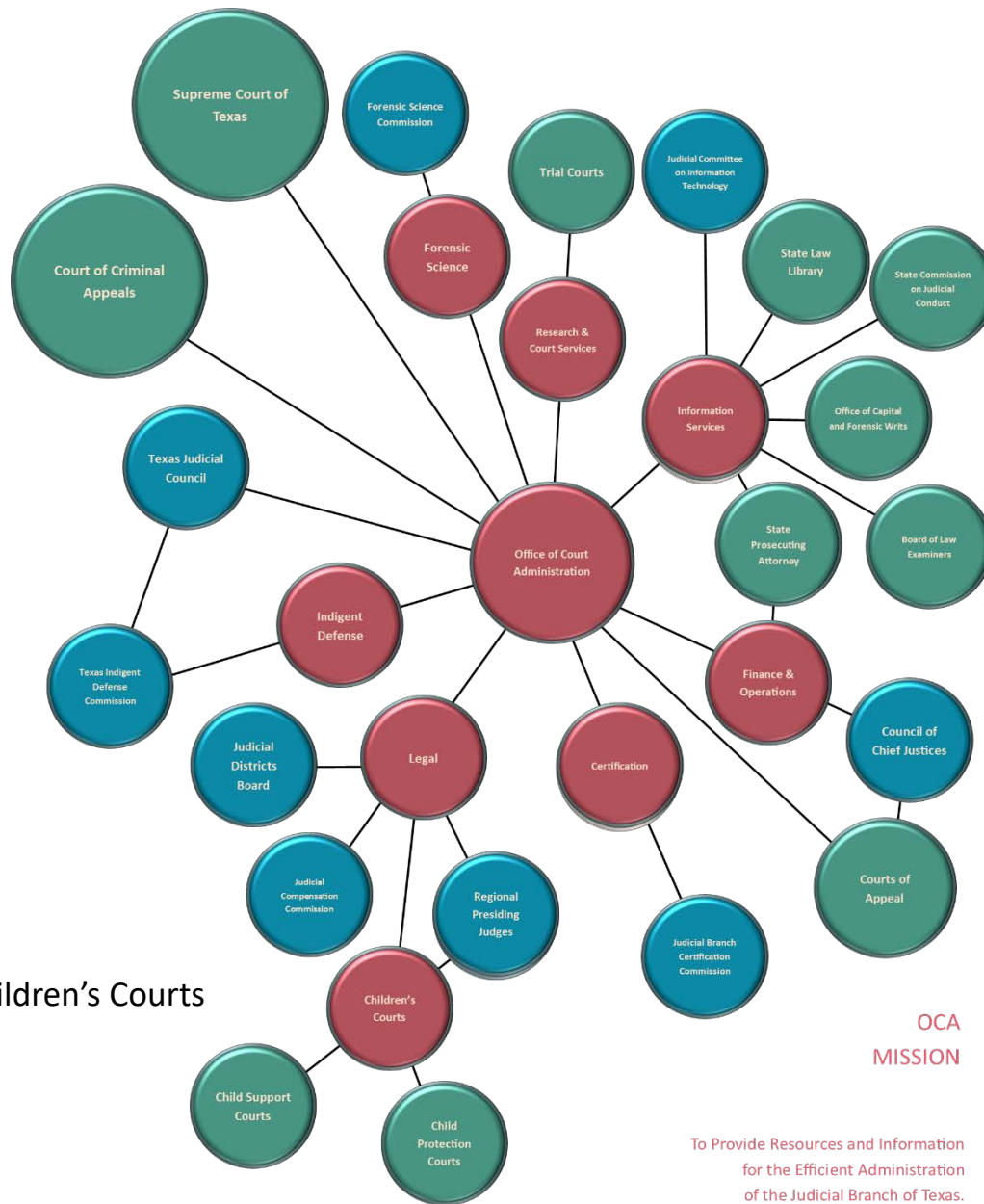


House Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence Committee  
Invited Testimony  
February 20, 2019



Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council  
David Slayton  
Administrative Director



**OCA  
MISSION**

To Provide Resources and Information  
for the Efficient Administration  
of the Judicial Branch of Texas.

Total FTEs = 236.6 \*

\*137.4 FTEs (58%) in Children's Courts



# Texas Judicial Council Priorities

## Guardianship Improvements

- Expansion of Compliance Project
- Guardianship Specialty Courts

## Modernizing Jurisdiction

- Increase Civil Jurisdiction Floor:
- District Courts from \$200 to \$10,000
- Statutory County Courts from \$200 to \$5,000
- Justice Courts from \$10,000 to \$20,000

## Business Courts

- Create business court for complex litigation that is part of existing court structure



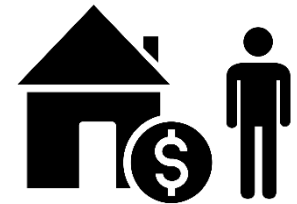
The civil justice system is a lot different than many perceive it to be.

## Perception



**Judgment: \$1,000,000**

## Reality



Plaintiff



Defendant

The civil caseload in **Texas** has undergone a significant transition.



**1992**

**1**



**tort**

**to**

**1**



**contract**

**2016**

**1**



**tort**

**to**

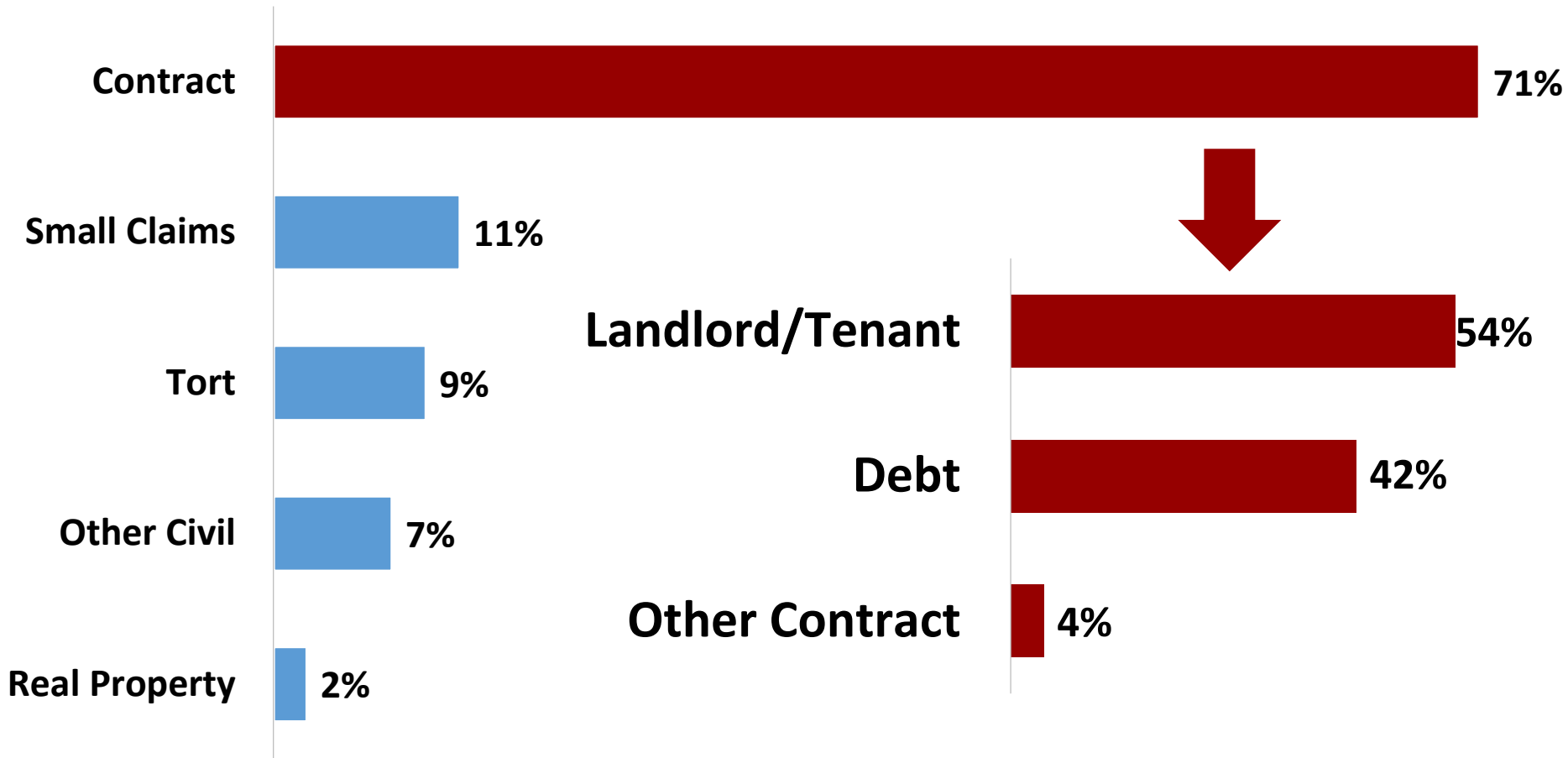
**7**



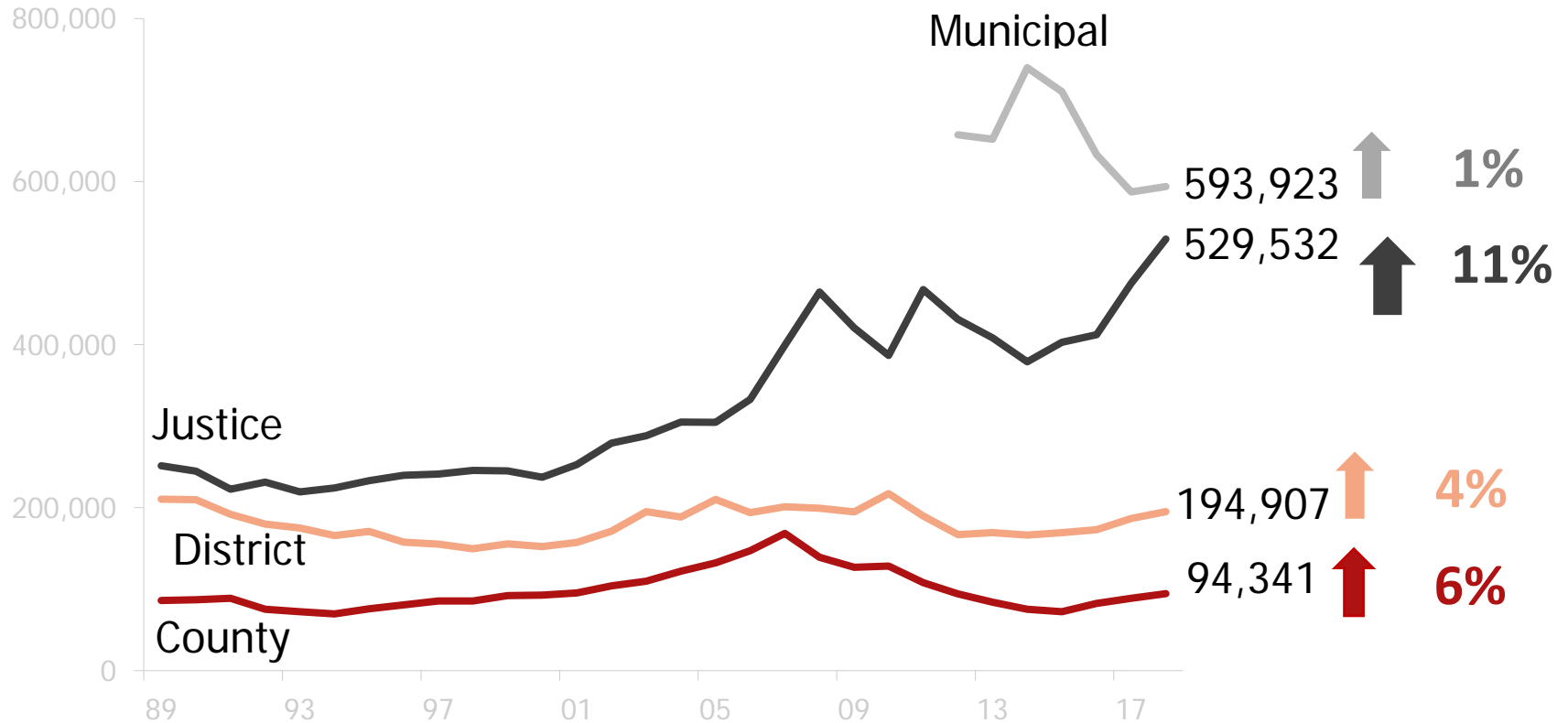
**contract**



**More than 80% of caseload involves contracts and small claims.**

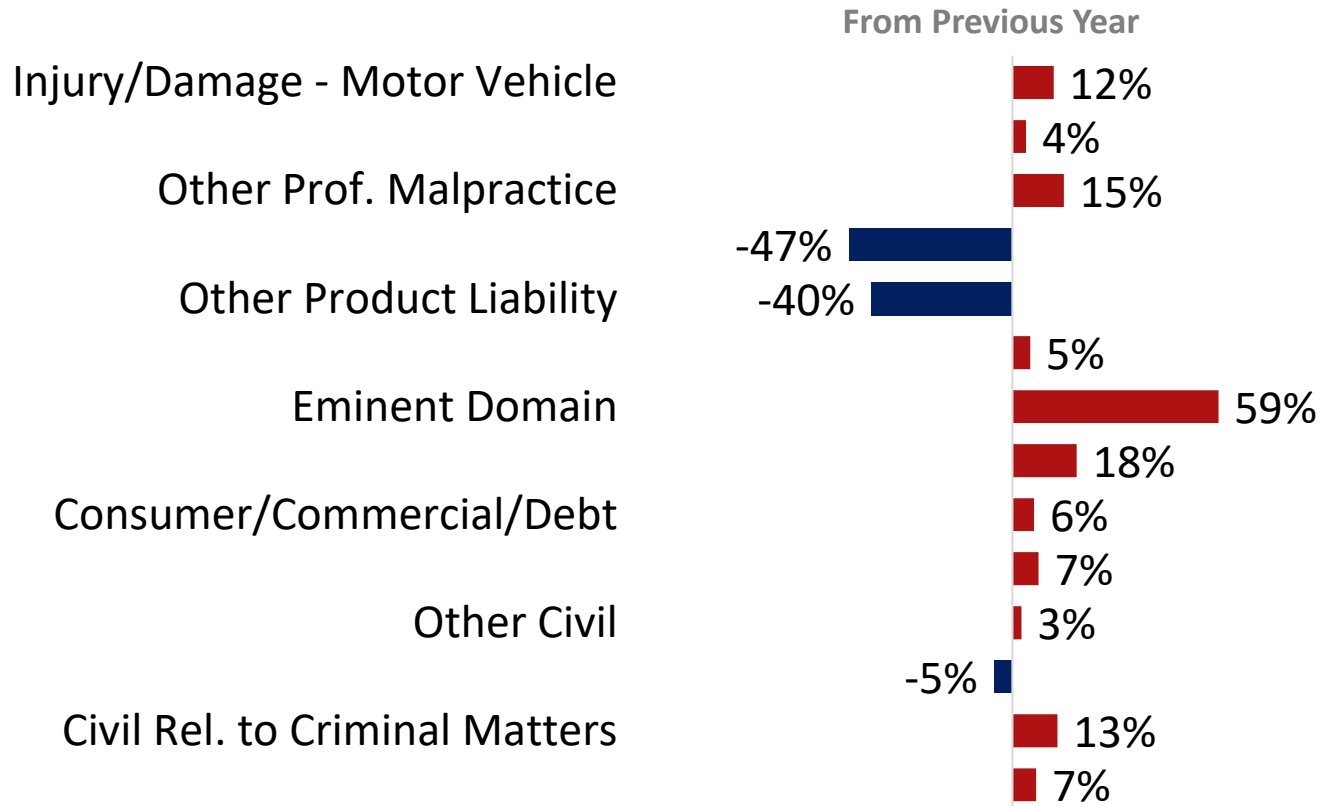


# New **civil** case filings increased in 2018 at every trial court level but most significantly in the justice courts.



Civil filings increased in nearly every case category.

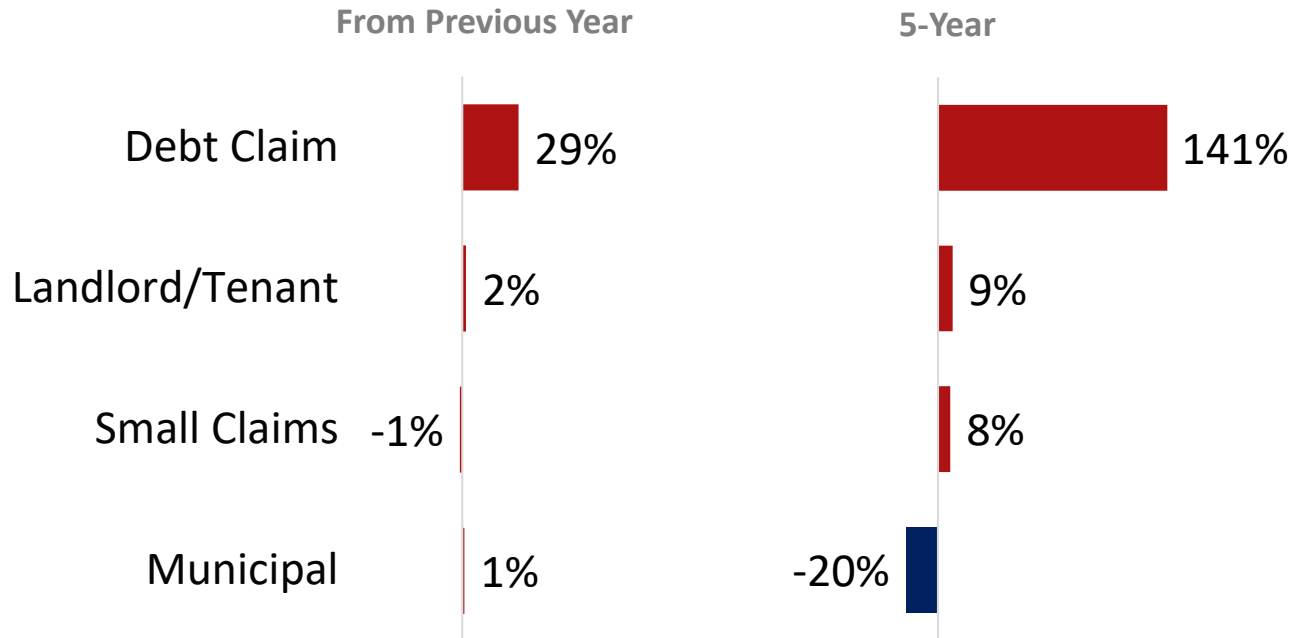
### Change in Filings – District and County Courts





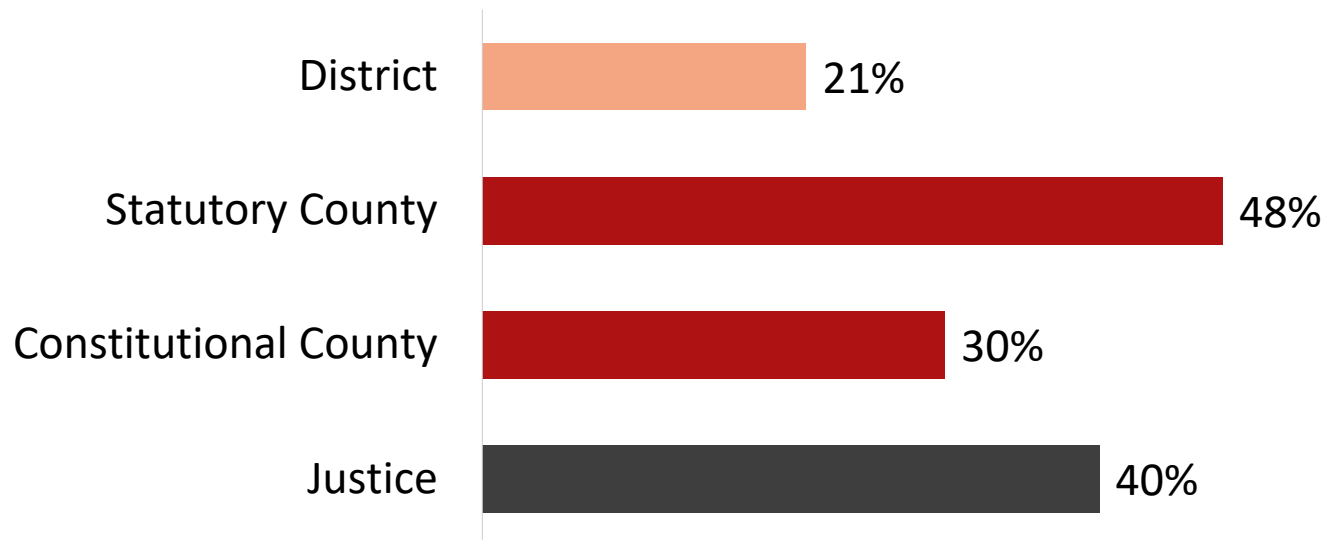
# Civil filings increased in nearly every case category.

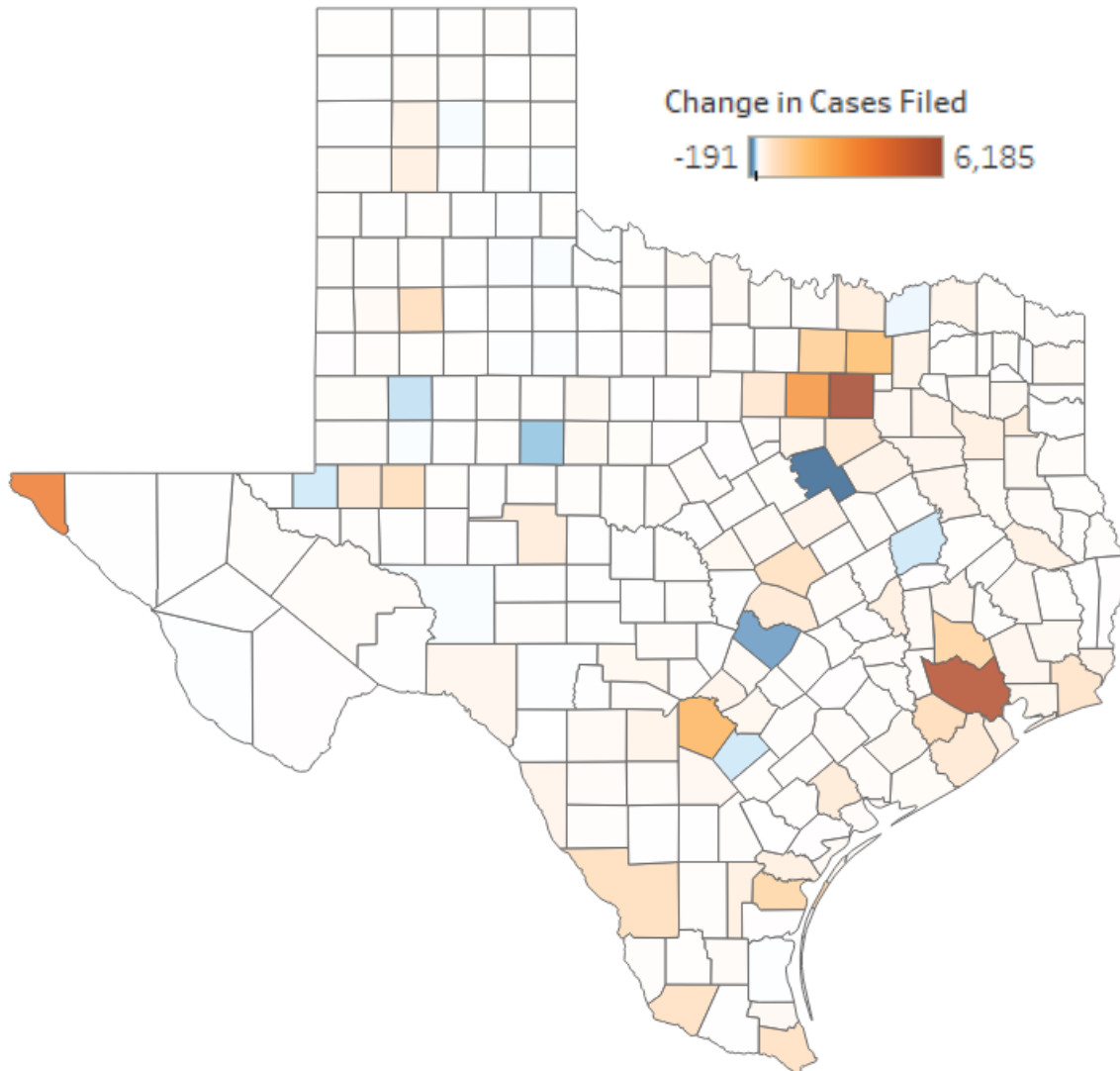
Change in Filings – Justice and Municipal Courts



**Debt** cases increased significantly over the last 5 years and account for a large share of the courts' civil caseload.

Debt Cases as % of Courts' Civil Caseload in 2018



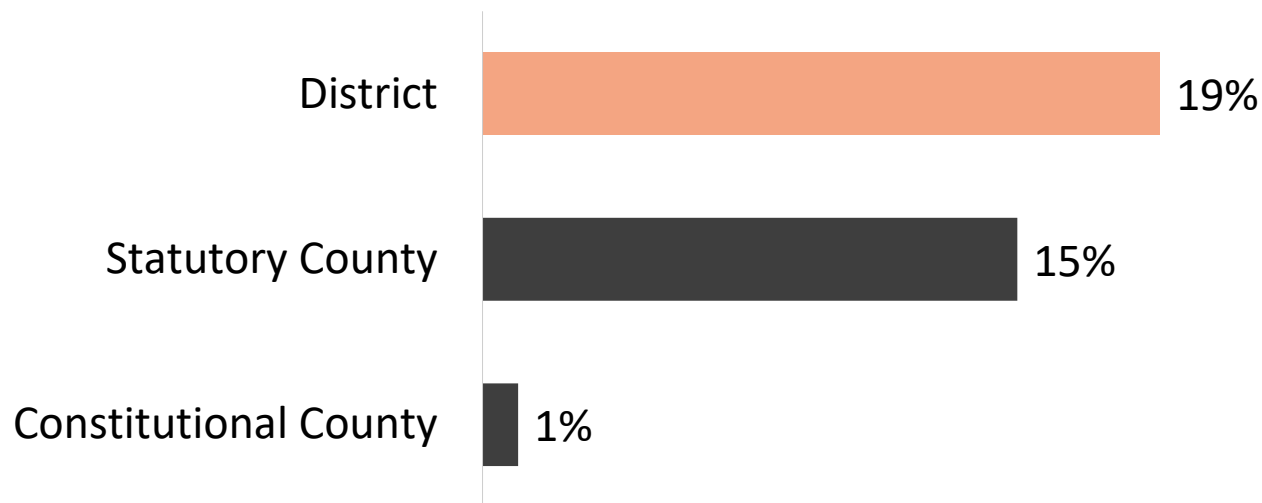


From 2017-18, the number of **debt** cases in the **justice courts** rose by nearly 48,000 (29%).

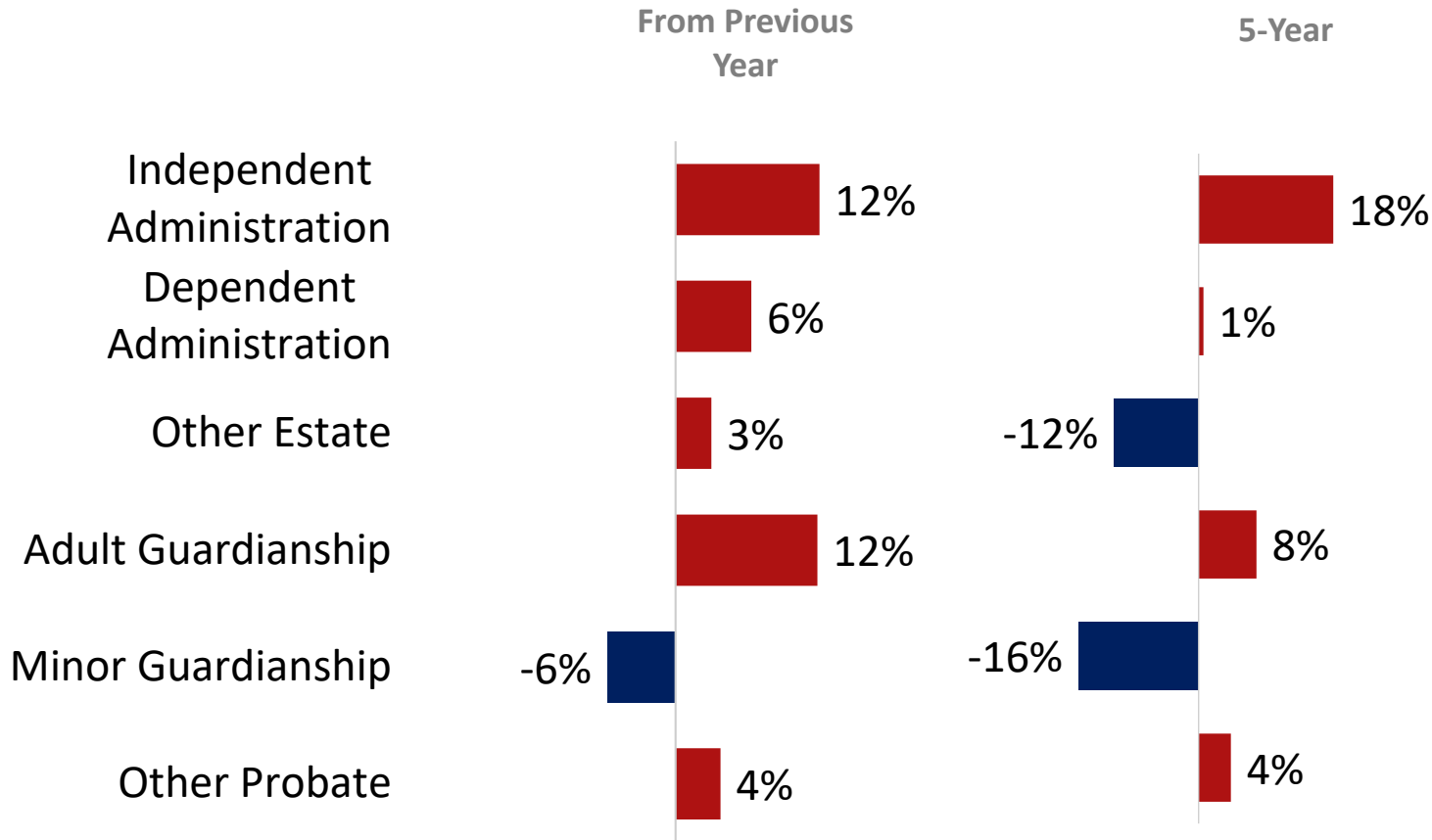
88 percent of counties reported an increase in cases.

**Injury/damage** cases involving a **motor vehicle** have increased significantly, primarily in the district courts where there has been a 70% increase in the last 5 years.

Motor Vehicle Cases as % of Courts' Civil Caseload in 2018



# Probate and guardianship filings increased in all case categories except minor guardianships.



After rising to an all-time high in 2017, the number of applications filed for involuntary **mental health** commitment declined by 4% in 2018.

