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NEWS RELEASE

HARRIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT APPROVES BAN ON ROADSIDE ANIMAL SALES

Violators Face \$500 Fine For Each Violation

Harris County Commissioners Court agreed unanimously Tuesday to outlaw the unlicensed sale of animals on public property in an effort to discourage irresponsible pet breeding and to combat animal overpopulation.

The ban makes it illegal to sell any type of animal on public property or public rights-of-way in unincorporated Harris County, including shopping center parking lots. Violators could be charged with a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by as much as a \$500 fine.

“We may not be able to eliminate unscrupulous animal breeding, but we can certainly eliminate a lot of the profit motive,” said Harris County Judge Ed Emmett. “We can also help protect our residents from sick animals and the slick breeders trying to make a buck off them. Many of these animals are unwanted and ill and end up being euthanized. That’s a tragedy that Commissioners Court is trying to prevent.”

The Texas Legislature approved a law earlier this year allowing officials in Harris, Bexar, Dallas and Tarrant counties to implement such a ban. Dr. Dawn Blackmar, the county’s director of veterinary public health, told court members that the ban would be an important tool in combating animal disease and overpopulation.

In other news, Commissioners Court was also presented a proposed county policy regarding the use of non-revenue EZ tags on the Harris County Toll Road system. Court members agreed to study the proposal for two weeks to allow time for comments and to ensure it is free of loopholes and enforceable.