



Date: September 24, 2007
Contact: Joe Stinebaker
Communications Director
713-755-4027
Joe.Stinebaker@cjo.hctx.net

NEWS RELEASE

HARRIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT TO CONSIDER BANNING ROADSIDE ANIMAL SALES

Health Officials Say Measure May Reduce Sales of Unhealthy Pets

Harris County Commissioners Court will consider banning the unlicensed sale of animals on public property tomorrow morning, responding to critics who say the practice encourages animal overpopulation and irresponsible pet breeding.

The Texas Legislature recently approved a law allowing officials in Harris, Bexar, Dallas and Tarrant counties to implement such a ban. The ban prohibits the sale of any live animals on public property or public rights-of-way in unincorporated Harris County. Officials with the county's Department of Public Health and Environmental Services have said the ban would help curb inhumane and unhealthy animal breeding in the county.

"The sales ban would eliminate the profit motive for people selling sick or inbred animals at roadside stands," said Harris County Judge Ed Emmett. "It not only protects the animals and the public at large, but protects buyers from doing business with unscrupulous breeders who vanish moments after selling the animals."

If passed by Commissioners Court, the ban would make such sales a Class C misdemeanor punishable by as much as a \$500 fine.

Commissioners Court will consider the measure when it meets at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 25, in the Commissioners Courtroom on the ninth floor of the County Administration Building at 1001 Preston in downtown Houston.

Commissioners Court also will meet at 9 a.m. Tuesday for its annual Mid-Year Budget Review.