



Date: September 10, 2007
Contact: Joe Stinebaker
Communications Director
713-755-4027
Joe.Stinebaker@cjo.hctx.net

NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSIONERS COURT TO CONSIDER EXTENDING JUVENILE CURFEW FOR THREE MORE YEARS

Proposal For Daytime Curfew Will Likely Be Tabled

Members of Harris County Commissioners Court are expected to renew the county's nighttime juvenile curfew when they meet Tuesday morning, extending the ban through September 2010.

The court has scheduled a public hearing on the curfew for 10 a.m., Sept. 11, in the Commissioners Courtroom at the County Administration Building at 1001 Preston in downtown Houston. This will be the third public hearing on the issue in three weeks.

None of those speaking at earlier hearings raised any complaints about the nighttime curfew, although there was opposition to expanding the curfew to daytime school hours. As a result, Commissioners Court is expected to delay any decision on a school hours curfew for at least three years.

"Sheriff Tommy Thomas and other law-enforcement officials have told us repeatedly that the nighttime curfew is a powerful tool in combating gang violence and juvenile crime," said County Judge Ed Emmett. "County residents have no tolerance for juvenile crime, and they want us to do everything we can to prevent it. The curfew is a perfect example of that kind of prevention, with officers in Harris County issuing nearly 2,500 curfew-related citations in the past three years alone."

Harris County's juvenile curfew applies to youths under 17 years of age and extends from midnight to 6 a.m., seven days a week. The curfew contains exceptions for youths accompanied by a responsible adult, traveling to or from work, or attending school, church or family events.

Despite his support for the nighttime curfew, Emmett has consistently opposed any extension to daylight hours.