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NEWS RELEASE

HARRIS COUNTY, STATE OF TEXAS GRANTS NEARLY ELIMINATE MEAL DELIVERY WAITING LIST

*State, County Grants Allow Interfaith Ministries To Feed
600 Clients On Waiting List For Home-Delivered Meals*

A recent grant from Harris County to the Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston has triggered a much larger grant from the state Department of Agriculture, virtually wiping out the group's long-standing waiting list for home-delivered meals, Harris County Judge Emmett and Texas State Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples announced today.

Staples came to Houston today to meet with Emmett and present Interfaith Ministries with a check for nearly \$1.4 million from the department's new Texans Feeding Texans grant program. Elliot Gershenson, Interfaith Ministries' president and chief executive officer, said the money would be used to feed as many as 600 needy and disabled seniors in the area.

Harris County Commissioners Court approved a \$77,000 grant to Interfaith Ministries, triggering the larger state grant.

"This is an example of what can be accomplished when different branches of government work together," said Emmett. "Hundreds more of our poorest and hungriest neighbors will be cared for now because state and local governments worked together to make it happen."

"This is historic," Gershenson said. "These grants allow Interfaith Ministries to add 600 people to our Meals on Wheels program, taking us to 4,000 seniors served each day. A year ago, we were serving approximately 3,000 a day."

Gershenson said his group also would be able to add 100 of the area's "most frail and isolated" clients to its breakfast and weekend delivery service because of the grant.

"The season of giving may be over, but the need to give continues," Staples said. "We need to do everything in our power to make sure our seniors and Texans with special needs never go hungry. This funding will help fill the stomachs and hearts of people who aren't looking for a hand out – just a helping hand."

Smaller grants also were awarded by the county and the state to officials with the City of LaPorte and the Jewish Community Center for their meal-delivery programs.