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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **JUDGE EMMETT TO INTRODUCE NEW SOUTHPAW DURING HARRIS COUNTY NIGHT AT THE ASTROS**

*Emmett Asks Disabled MHMRA Client Leland Kaps  
To Take The Mound Friday Night*

Harris County Judge Ed Emmett has given the honor of throwing out the first pitch at Friday night's matchup between the Houston Astros and Milwaukee Brewers to die-hard Astros fan Leland Kaps, a 48-year-old client of Harris County's Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority.

Kaps, an MHMRA client with intellectual and developmental disabilities, was thrilled at the opportunity to take the field at Minute Maid Park with his Astros idols. Kaps will be joined at the ballpark by his brother and sister and their families, and Emmett has arranged for seating for approximately 50 other MHMRA clients and friends.

Kaps will be available for interviews before or after the first pitch. Members of the media may call Rob Acord with the Astros at 281-382-5039 if interested.

The event is part of "Harris County Night at the Astros," an annual event in which discounted tickets are offered to Harris County employees. In past years, Emmett has donated his first pitch opportunity to a Marine returning from Iraq and Miss Texas USA.

MHMRA officials say that Kaps, who shares an apartment with two other MHMRA clients as part of a community-based residential program, has decorated his room with numerous Astros posters, jerseys, bobble heads and videos. Kaps used to attend Astros games with his father, who died several years ago, and is a die-hard Craig Biggio fan.

"I couldn't be happier for Leland," said Emmett. "I've experienced the thrill of walking out to that pitching mound in front of all those fans, and I know Leland is going to enjoy it tremendously. Another benefit will be that Leland's pitch will remind us that – like everyone – those with intellectual and developmental disabilities cherish their independence, love their families and enjoy a trip to the ballpark."

Despite a muscle contracture in his arm, the left-handed Kaps assured MHMRA officials he would have no trouble bringing the heat on Friday night. MHMRA officials said Kaps was so excited at the prospect, he already was practicing his pitches in the hall at MHMRA offices.