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NEWS RELEASE

HARRIS COUNTY JUDGE ED EMMETT FOCUSES ON LITANY OF PUBLIC PROJECTS TO RECOGNIZE 'A COUNTY OF SUBSTANCE'

*Emmett's Fifth State of the County Address
Recognizes Dedication of County Emergency and Fire Officials,
Stresses Need for Ethics Enforcement*

Assuring business and community leaders from around the area that the state of Harris County is "far better than most governmental entities," County Judge Ed Emmett focused a large part of his annual State of the County address Wednesday on highlighting the role that generations of county leaders have played in ensuring that Harris County remains "A County of Substance."

Emmett spoke to approximately 1,000 attendees at the Greater Houston Partnership's annual event at the Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel. It was Emmett's fifth State of the County address since becoming county judge in March of 2007. He was introduced by Irma Diaz-Gonzalez, the president of Employment and Training Centers and the former chair of the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

"Our finances *are* tight and our needs, like our population, *are* growing," Emmett said. "But county leaders are committed to providing efficient, effective government. We are also committed to maintaining the trust and confidence of county residents."

Emmett also acknowledged several high-profile scandals involving county officials in 2011, and told the gathering that the county "must find a way to prevent unethical behavior as much as possible and to establish clear channels for uncovering and reporting such behavior when it occurs."

But Emmett sought to keep the spotlight primarily on the hundreds of major projects and programs ensuring the county's economic vitality, listing precinct-by-precinct highlights of successful programs initiated or completed by Harris County commissioners in the past year.

"Years from now, if we do our job well," Emmett said, "a future county judge will stand before an even bigger crowd and speak of an even larger, more prosperous county."