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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **HARRIS COUNTY JUDGE ED EMMETT PROPOSES REEXAMINATION OF AREA GOVERNMENT** *Says Unprecedented Growth in Unincorporated County Warrants Another Look At Roles of Local and Regional Government*

With unincorporated Harris County set to pass the City of Houston in population by the next Census, Harris County Judge Ed Emmett has called for a reexamination of how local, regional and state governments provide necessary services for their constituencies.

“Rather than try to emulate what has been deemed successful in cities and communities that grew up before the advent of automobiles, we should tackle a different task, with vastly more potential,” Emmett told the nearly 1,000 attendees of his 2014 State of the County Address. “That task is to leverage the strengths of our metropolitan area and become the leader for others around the world to follow.”

Assuring those gathered that Harris County’s financial condition remains “excellent,” Emmett used his seventh State of the County Address to congratulate members of Commissioners Court and the County Budget Office for ensuring that the county is well poised to meet the challenges of the future. He was introduced by Precinct 1 Commissioner El Franco Lee.

While acknowledging the possibility of stirring controversy, Emmett said it is time to ask questions about how services such as health care and housing are delivered and how to eliminate duplication of facilities and governmental agencies. He said it’s time to ask how the metropolitan region can be governed more efficiently.

“I realize that some will engage in so-called turf battles,” Emmett said. “Others will try to strangle government growth by imposing arbitrary limits on revenue, not realizing their short-sightedness. And still others will focus only on the short-term politics involved. We must resist all such hindrances.”