



Date: October 23, 2007
Contact: Joe Stinebaker
Communications Director
O) 713-755-4027
C) 713-503-2610
Joe.Stinebaker@cjo.hctx.net

NEWS RELEASE

HARRIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT PASSES HISTORIC PROPERTY TAX CUT

Court Votes To Approve Its Largest Tax Cut Ever

Harris County Commissioners Court unanimously approved County Judge Ed Emmett's proposal this morning to cut the county's property tax rate by one cent, the largest property tax cut ever passed by the court.

The move will lower the county's overall property tax rate to 62.998 cents per \$100 assessed valuation from the previous rate of 63.998 cents. The tax decrease will trigger no cuts in service and is not expected to affect the county's bond rating.

"Property appraisals have been increasing for several years now, and government has continued to grow as a result. We on Commissioners Court realized it was time to take action to restrain that growth and to allow taxpayers to keep more of their money," Emmett said. "The true reform now has to come in the appraisal process. The next step is to get the state legislature to pass meaningful tax appraisal reform."

Today's tax cut marks only the third time the rate has been lowered in 20 years. The new, lower property tax rate will be reflected in 2007 tax bills being mailed to Harris County property owners next month.

Emmett praised his colleagues on Commissioners Court today, saying that their guidance and foresight in recent years ensured that the county stayed on such solid financial footing that it could absorb the tax cut and continue to prosper.

"They have done a remarkable job of maintaining the financial security of the county," Emmett said just before the vote. "Harris County is a model for the nation, and this rate cut continues that responsible approach to government."