



KENNETH MAGIDSON

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS**

Oct. 7, 2008

News Release:

Contact: Public Information Office
PIO George Flynn 713-755-3320

DA Gains Staff to Enhance Prosecutions

(Houston TX) – Harris County District Attorney Kenneth Magidson gained approval Tuesday for 20 new positions to enhance prosecutions for public corruption, identity theft, consumer and welfare fraud, and to supplement the Operations Division.

Harris County Commissioners Court approval followed an appearance by the District Attorney to explain that the staffing would produce long-term efficiencies and effectively prepare the office for the arrival of the new District Attorney in January.

Changes reflect a thorough review process by Magidson and his management team to pare staff proposals down to match core requirements.

“These are essential resources for meeting our most current and future needs as they evolve,” Magidson said. “They will enable us to continue the progress and advances by this office in effectively prosecuting criminals.”

A total of two new attorneys and seven support personnel are to be added for these critical DA’s functions:

**** Identity Theft:** A legal assistant and attorney will be added for investigations and prosecutions, and to help clear the names of victims. These often complex and increasingly widespread cases have more than doubled in the last three years.

**** Public Integrity:** An investigator and Certified Fraud Examiner will expand the screenings and prosecutions for this important division. It provides enforcement against abuses of the public trust, government corruption and Election Code violations.

**** Consumer Fraud Division and Welfare Fraud Division:** Two Consumer Fraud legal assistants and a Welfare Fraud attorney will expedite the increased investigations and prosecutions of these cases.

**** Asset Forfeiture Division:** An added investigator will help handle caseloads which have doubled in the past five years. Pending cases now involve \$19.4 million in assets seized from alleged criminal activities.

**** Extraditions** from other states and countries: An administrator will focus on the increasing legal activity. Front-line prosecutors, who now handle extraditions, would be freed to concentrate on their courtroom duties.

The District Attorney also received approvals for reclassifications to reflect other needs of the office. New personnel will include two computer technicians and nine imaging clerks to reduce mounting paperwork and storage costs. It is part of Magidson’s program to recognize and evaluate critical areas that will improve efficiency in administration and operations.

(End)

