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## **District Attorney Lykos Applauds Commissioners' Court for Approving Regional Crime Lab; Fast Suburban Growth Cited as Key Factor**

*Commissioners approve plan recommended by Lykos to build state-of-the-art  
Institute of Forensic Sciences facility within Texas Medical Center*

Citing rapid population growth over the past decade in unincorporated areas of Harris County, District Attorney Pat Lykos on Tuesday praised Commissioners' Court for its unanimous approval of plans to construct a new regional crime lab within the Texas Medical Center.

The new nine-story facility will house the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences, under the direction of Dr. Luis A. Sanchez. Bonds for the project were approved by voters in 2007.

"This is a historic moment," Lykos said. "The Institute of Forensic Sciences already does exceptional work for over 100 area law-enforcement agencies, but we've seen extraordinary growth across Harris County in the last decade, including a population increase of 50% in unincorporated parts of the county alone."

"This partnership creates a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach to forensic research and applied science that will engage the Institute with the wider Texas Medical Center community," Lykos continued. "Timely forensic testing that meets the highest scientific standards is absolutely essential to the administration of justice. Harris County will soon be home to the premiere forensic science institute in the world, one that is worthy of its citizens" Lykos concluded.

The Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences is accredited by the Texas Medical Association, the American Board of Forensic Toxicology, the Texas Department of Public Safety, and the National Association of Medical Examiners, among others. The Institute's responsibilities include autopsies, toxicology, DNA testing, and scientific analysis.

The plan also calls for an interim DNA laboratory to open this summer. This facility will greatly increase the county's ability to provide prompt, efficient, and scientifically-valid DNA analysis to participating law enforcement agencies in the region.

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