March 2, 2009

News Release

Public Information Office

Donna Hawkins

George Flynn

713-755-3320

**DA Lykos Announces New Discovery Agreement**

(Houston, Texas) -- Harris County District Attorney Patricia Lykos on Monday announced the implementation of a new discovery agreement that will ensure transparency and fairness in the administration of justice. The agreement provides for the distribution of police offense reports to criminal defense lawyers. This initiative will change the longstanding practice of lawyers being permitted only to take notes from state copies of reports.

The discovery agreement also allows the state to provide the defense with copies of witness statements, photographs and other documentary evidence that the prosecution intends to introduce at trial. Certain identifying information about witnesses and victims that are confidential or involve safety of individuals will be redacted.

District Attorney Lykos said, “It is my fundamental belief that convictions based upon evidence that has been disclosed, builds public trust and confidence in the justice system. Justice demands and the community deserves that prosecution be vigorous, but be conducted within Constitutional boundaries. Under this new discovery plan, I expect that the cases will be resolved more rapidly because of a more informed process.”

(end)