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## **Harris County ADA Appointed to Governor's Criminal Justice Council**

Tara George, a seven-year veteran of the Harris County District Attorney's Office and Chief Prosecutor in the 180<sup>th</sup> District Court, was appointed earlier this month to Governor Rick Perry's Criminal Justice Advisory Council.

ADA George has worked extensively representing the interests of the state as part of Harris County's *STAR: Success Through Addiction Recovery* drug-court initiative, in which non-violent offenders are carefully evaluated and then placed in an intensive, comprehensive and rigorously supervised drug-treatment program. George has been involved with *STAR* for several years, and has personally observed the value in lives turned around and money saved to taxpayers.

Also appointed to serve on the council was Mary Covington, coordinator for the *STAR* program.

Upon receiving the news, George said she felt honored by Governor Perry's selection, and hopes to spread the word about the program's success. She also looks forward to learning more about similar programs instituted throughout Texas.

District Attorney Pat Lykos stated, "Tara is a dedicated prosecutor with an innate ability to assess, research and evaluate criminal matters. She will bring a great deal of intelligence and wisdom to the council. Tara will make an exceptional representative for Harris County criminal justice."

The Criminal Justice Advisory Council was formed in 2005 by Executive Order of Governor Rick Perry. The council was tasked with advising the Governor on matters related to criminal justice, including adequacy of procedures, throughout the case pendency and through post-conviction. Nine members are appointed to serve.

In addition to George and Covington, seven others were appointed to serve, including Ruben Reyes of Lubbock (chairman), Joel Bennett of Austin, Robb Catalano of Fort Worth, Alan "Clay" Childress of Leander, Becca Crowell of Dallas, Debra Fesperman of Sherman, and Dibrell Waldrell of New Braunfels.