

JIM LEITNER
FIRST ASSISTANT



CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER
1201 FRANKLIN, SUITE 600
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77002-1901

PATRICIA R. LYKOS
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

Public Information Office
(713) 755-3320

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**DA Lykos calls on Commissioners to fast-track
construction of 21st-Century regional crime lab**

*Institute of Forensic Sciences would get new, modern facility within Texas Medical Center to
provide independent, high-quality forensic testing for area law enforcement agencies*

Houston, Texas

District Attorney Pat Lykos urged Commissioners' Court this morning to move forward with plans for an independent regional crime lab, to be operated by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences.

Statement by Lykos as prepared, in full

"This is a historic moment. The Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences is one of the leading forensic science centers in the United States."

"Should this honorable court approve the proposition today, the Court will begin the creation of the premiere forensic institute, in the world. Located in the Texas Medical Center—which is the foremost medical center in the world, the Institute and the Medical Center will benefit from collaborative, multi-disciplinary scientific research, and applied science."

"Our institute performs work for over 100 agencies; it is regional and autonomous, independent of any law enforcement agency. It has no backlog, including rape kits; it gets the work done and does it exceptionally well. However, it is at a critical juncture regarding capacity and with the exponential growth of the county, (population in the unincorporated areas grew 50% in the past ten years) and in our metropolitan region, it is imperative that we act immediately."

"I respectfully request Commissioners Court to approve the site and property acquisition recommended by the Public Infrastructure Department for the nine story institute."

"The voters approved a bond issue five years ago; design can begin in February, with the urging of the Court. Further, should the Court instruct that design and construction be expedited, the Institute can be completed by December 2013."

"Regarding the new Forensic Genetics Laboratory, (JP McGovern Building) design is near completion. Should the Court expedite, it can be open this summer and greatly enhance DNA testing capacity."

"These projects are momentous and I am sure that the architects and builders agree and that they are proud to participate and will swiftly and efficiently complete them, while restraining costs."

"Should there be some costs associated with project acceleration, the District Attorney's Office will help fund."

"The Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences will be truly a 21st Century, cutting edge science and technology institute, worthy of the people of Harris County. Justice and public safety deserve no less."

"The planets are all aligned, your vote today will make this vision a reality and it will be your enduring legacy."

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