

Resolution

WHEREAS, the Harris County District Clerk's Office (DCO) supports over 90 courts and is the registrar, recorder, and custodian of all court pleadings, instruments, trial evidence, and papers for legal proceedings in the District Courts and the County Courts at Law. The DCO is also responsible for summoning Harris County residents for jury service for the above-referenced courts, as well as for the County Civil and Probate courts; and

WHEREAS, upon arriving in office, District Clerk Marilyn Burgess discovered historically low jury participation, diversity rates, and juror usage rates in Harris County. The rates were below a reasonable standard and lower than the rates of some neighboring counties; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic created the worst appearance rates for jury service the county has ever seen and created an opportunity to dive deeper into appearance rate data and probable causes. District Clerk Burgess launched the first stage of e-Juror as a way to improve efficiency in this environment. This system allows the DCO to communicate with jurors before their day of service to give them important updates and reminders; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 2020, District Clerk Burgess conducted an exit survey of summoned jurors and hired a data science consulting firm to conduct a robust study on juror participation; and

WHEREAS, in February 2021, District Clerk Burgess launched the first jury service awareness campaign to educate Harris County residents on the importance of jury service and how vital their role is in our justice system; and

WHEREAS, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) presented District Clerk Burgess the prestigious G. Thomas Munsterman Award that recognizes District Clerk Burgess' successful implementation of e-Juror, the electronic summoning system, providing free parking, coffee, and a pay increase to Harris County jurors, and launching an outreach campaign to promote jury service in Harris County: now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that Harris County Commissioners Court commends and congratulates

Harris County District Clerk Marilyn Burgess

for winning the prestigious G. Thomas Munsterman National Award on Jury Innovation.

It is hereby **ORDERED** that this resolution be spread upon the minutes of Commissioners Court this 30th day of November 2021.

LINA HIDALGO, County Judge

RODNEY ELLIS, Commissioner
Precinct One

ADRIAN GARCIA, Commissioner
Precinct Two

TOM S. RAMSEY, P.E., Commissioner
Precinct Three

R. JACK CAGLE, Commissioner
Precinct Four

ATTEST:

Teneshia Hudspeth, County Clerk
Harris County, T E X A S