



SUSAN HAWK
CRIMINAL DISTRICT ATTORNEY
DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS

September 6, 2016

Governor Greg Abbott
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Dear Governor Abbott,

It is with a heavy heart that I must tender my resignation as Dallas County District Attorney. It's been an honor and a privilege to serve this office and the citizens of Dallas County, but my health needs my undivided attention.

More than my words could express, I appreciate the grace I've been shown as I've tried to balance my health and my duties. This has been a very difficult process for me as I've dedicated my life to serving our criminal justice system. I believe our office is making a difference and I want to continue that good work. But last fall upon returning from treatment, I made a commitment to step away from the office if I felt I could no longer do my job, and unfortunately I've reached that point as my health needs my full attention in the coming months.

While my personal health issues have received much attention over the past months, it's my hope that those issues do not overshadow the great work of our office over the past 20 months, so I would like to give you some of our highlights:

- Improved **overall efficiency**, allowing the DA's office to reduce the cost of disposition per case, getting taxpayers more for their money
- Increased **trust and transparency** by putting an external audit process in place for forfeiture fund expenditures, and then regularly posting these expenses for public review
- Secured more than **\$2 million in grant funding** to support additional resources and services in the Sexual Assault and Family Violence units, funding critical to testing rape kits that have been backlogged for years
- Conducted **6 town hall meetings**, including the DA's office first bilingual town hall addressing safety issues in Hispanic communities
- Creation of the **Community Response Team** which targets offenders who pose the biggest threat to our community and have high rates of recidivism, and providing specialized prosecution strategies and greater collaboration with the trial courts to close the revolving door

- Expansion of the **Conviction Integrity Unit**, and recruiting nationally-renowned leadership for that unit. This action already has led to relief for Steven Mark Chaney, who spent more than 28 years in prison based primarily on bite-mark evidence that has now been discredited. Recently, Mr. Chaney was fully exonerated for the crime he did not commit
- Creation of the **DA in Schools** program, targeting at-risk communities, and working to build a positive relationship between targeted communities and law enforcement
- Creation of the **nation's most comprehensive DA-driven diversion unit**, the Reformatory Justice Unit, which steers young adult and mentally ill offenders away from incarceration and directing them to life changing resources and services

I spent the first six months of my tenure assembling what I believe is a leadership team for our DA's office that is among the best in the nation. The office is running better than ever, and it's my hope that this team can stay together and move forward seamlessly with a new leader.

On a personal note, I want to say that I've loved serving the citizens of Dallas County for the past 22 years as an intern at the DA's office, as a prosecutor, as a judge and as District Attorney. The courthouse has been my home. My purpose has been to help people, and I've loved every minute of it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Hawk". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Respectfully,".

Hon. Susan Hawk

cc: Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins