COURT ORDER NO. 2007- 231 -03-06

THE STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF COLLIN

On **March 6, 2007,** the Commissioners Court of Collin County, Texas, met in **regular session** with the following members present and participating, to wit:

Keith Self	**County Judge, Presiding**
Phyllis Cole	**Commissioner, Precinct 1**
Jerry Hoagland	**Commissioner, Precinct 2**
Joe Jaynes	**Commissioner, Precinct 3**
Jack Hatchell	**Commissioner, Precinct 4**

During such session the court considered a request for adoption of the following resolution concerning ownership of the court record and electronic court reporting in Collin County

WHEREAS, Collin County's population is approximately 730,000 and is expected to grow to more than 1.2 million by 2030 with an estimated 93 persons moving into the county each day; and

WHEREAS, Collin County's growing infrastructure necessitates efficiency in the county-court-at-law and district court systems; and

WHEREAS, court reporter costs are a substantial portion of the annual operating cost of a court; and

WHEREAS, Collin County incurred $2,035,080 in court reporter costs in Fiscal Year 2006, which is an average cost of $143,362 per court; and

WHEREAS, proven electronic court reporting alternatives are available to substantially reduce court reporting costs to both the county and public; and

WHEREAS, audio recordings can be easily and quickly copied for parties -- reducing transcription costs by allowing the private sector to compete in transcribing records; and

WHEREAS, In Fiscal Year 06, Collin County paid in excess of $150,000 in transcription costs directly to court reporters who were producing those transcripts during the work day or during paid time off; and

WHEREAS, court reporters charge $4 per page to interested parties for transcripts (in addition to their salaries); and

WHEREAS, SB179 provides that records of the court proceedings are the property of the county and not the court reporter; and

WHEREAS, current state law provides court reporters an additional six weeks of paid time off specific to completing transcripts for resell; and

WHEREAS, current state law permits the district judges, and not the commissioners court, to set compensation levels for court reporters and whereas the currently sitting judges pay their court reporters $84,905.60/year; and

WHEREAS, legal professionals such as assistant district attorneys have a starting salary of $52,000 per year; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Collin County Commissioners Court

1. Supports the utilization of electronic court reporting in county courts at law and state district courts, and
2. Asks the state legislature to pass laws which allow for the full implementation and utilization of electronic court reporting at all levels of the judicial system including appellate courts, and
3. Supports SB179 giving the ownership of court records to the county and that all transcript revenues be deemed revenue to the county and not the court reporters, and
4. Asks that the state legislature repeal section 52.051 of the Government Code that gives the state district judges the authority to set the salaries for court reporters and assign this duty to the Commissioners Court under section 152.011 of the Local Government Code, and
5. Asks that the legislature repeal current law that authorizes court reporters to take as much as six weeks of paid transcript time off per year.

DULY PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 13TH DAY OF MARCH, 2007.

Keith Self, County Judge

Phyllis Cole, Commissioner, Pct. 1

Jerry Hoagland, Commissioner, Pct. 2

~ No vote ~

Joe Jaynes, Commissioner, Pct. 3

Jack Hatchell, Commissioner, Pct. 4

COUNTY COURT OF COLLIN COUNTY, TEXAS

ATTEST:

Stacey Kemp, Ex-Officio Clerk
Commissioners' Court
Collin County, T E X A S