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### **“No Refusal” Weekend to target DWI this 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday**

To combat the problem of intoxicated drivers on Texas roads a statewide No Refusal Program is underway this 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. As part of that program, the Ellis County & District Attorney’s Office and the Ellis County Sheriff’s Office, working with all Ellis County law enforcement agencies, are coordinating a local no refusal effort.

Beginning Friday evening, July 1<sup>st</sup>, and continuing through Tuesday morning, July 5<sup>th</sup>, prosecutors will be on call to assist law enforcement with the drafting of search warrants that will allow officers to collect a blood sample from DWI suspects who refuse to provide a breath sample. Judges across the county will also be on call 24 hours a day to review and approve those warrants. If a warrant is approved, the suspect’s blood will immediately be drawn by a trained medical professional. Blood samples will be submitted to the Texas Department of Public Safety for analysis.

Sheriff Johnny Brown is providing nurses at the Wayne McCollum Detention Center, who will be available to draw blood from DWI suspects. According to Sheriff Brown, “Some police agencies have relationships with nearby hospitals that will allow those agencies to take the suspects to the hospital for the blood draw. That’s great for those agencies. But most agencies in the county have no such resource. We are offering our facility and our personnel for all Ellis County law enforcement agencies, because we want to send the message that driving while intoxicated will not be tolerated in our county.”

Patrick Wilson, Ellis County & District Attorney, issued the following statement: “As always, the no refusal program ensures that law enforcement officials will be able to obtain scientific evidence in 100 percent of DWI arrests, ensuring that the innocent are found innocent and the guilty are found guilty.

“Driving is a privilege, not a right. With that privilege comes a profound responsibility for the safety of everyone in the community. Families and friends celebrating our nation’s independence should be free from the dangers posed by intoxicated drivers on our county’s roads. Our no refusal program, coupled with enhanced DWI patrols by law enforcement, is an effort to provide that freedom.”