



Thomas E. Brown, Sheriff

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GOVERNOR PERDUE 'EMANCIPATES' DEKALB'S CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS: SIGNS HB 700

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS NOW CAN MANAGE THEIR OWN BUDGETS AND CONTRACTING

Decatur, Ga. – In unity, DeKalb County's constitutional officers traveled together to Governor Sonny Perdue's Office today (May 23) to witness his signing of House Bill 700 -- the stamping of their authority to manage their own budgets and contracting decisions. The bill, sponsored by State Representative Earnest "Coach" Williams, also aligns them with other constitutional officers across the state.

"Through the provisions of HB 700, we corrected a flaw that really needed to be corrected, and I was happy to be of service to my constituents who are constitutional officers," Representative Williams said. "I also was pleased to have 12 of the 19 members of the DeKalb delegation support the bill in their insightful effort to correct a defect in the DeKalb system."

Although county commissioners and the chief executive officer will still set the total amount of the allotted budgets, the bill in effect transfers to DeKalb's constitutional officers – the sheriff, the district attorney, the tax commissioner and the clerk of Superior Court – the right to shift funds around within their budgets and to control contracting decisions for their agencies. They will still go through a bidding process on purchases that exceed \$50,000.

"The organizational act with respect to the previous DeKalb system was flawed from the beginning because it removed the responsibility of the constitutional officer who held the actual accountability for running the office," Sheriff Thomas Brown said. "I personally thank Representative Williams for his strong leadership in moving this legislation forward."

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