

**Council President Arnie Fielkow
Requests Administration Formulate Specific Enforcement Plan
For Council Ordinance on DBEs and Local Businesses**

News Release

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New Orleans
City Council

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New Orleans, LA - August 11, 2009 - At today's joint meeting of the New Orleans City Council's Special Development Projects and Economic Development and Budget committees, City Council President Arnie Fielkow called for the administration, within 30 days, to provide a specific plan for dedicated enforcement of the city's recently-codified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) and local business utilization ordinance.

After receiving details of the administration's current DBE/local enforcement efforts from Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Julie Schwam Harris and Compliance Director Alvin Porter, Fielkow emphasized the city's need for a comprehensive, specific enforcement plan.

"We've had a compliance program since 2006 but there has been a lot of objection from minority business groups regarding not having an appropriate execution team in place," said Fielkow. "As chairman of the economic development committee, I want to see a specific plan of execution and enforcement for the law put in place in June.

"Trying to ensure compliance with a one-person office has not been successful and we can't wait for another year," Fielkow said.

Fielkow asked the administration to bring back, in no more than 30

days, a specific plan as to:

- how the current city enforcement office can be beefed up;
 - the potential for outsourcing compliance as many cities have done;
- or
- the potential combination of the two

The ordinance, unanimously approved by the council in June, codifies and extends the provisions set forth by Mayor Ray Nagin's executive order establishing goals for DBE and local small business recovery. It institutes a goal that 50 percent of any project funded by the city must be controlled by local businesses. It also establishes an overall goal that 35 percent of any project funded by the city must be controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged businesses, particularly those located in damaged areas. Individual project goals shall be established on a project-by-project basis and based on availability of locally owned and disadvantaged businesses.

The legislation was overwhelmingly endorsed by the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce, the New Orleans Business Council, the Black Economic Development Council and the Urban League of Greater New Orleans because it guarantees equity in the contracting process.

New Orleans City Council

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans city government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; Council Vice President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.