

Statement

February 16, 2009



Councilmember Fielkow Statement

Re: Mayor's Veto of Professional Services Contract Ordinance

New Orleans, LA - February 16, 2009 - Today, Council Vice President Arnie Fielkow issued the following statement upon being notified of Mayor Nagin's Veto of Ordinance Number 23,288:

"I am disappointed, though not surprised, to learn of Mayor Nagin's veto of the Professional Services Contract Ordinance today. This legislation, to ensure that the City's competitive selection process for professional service contracts is in compliance with Louisiana's Open Meetings Law, was unanimously supported by the City Council at our February 5th Council meeting.

No new arguments have been advanced in the Mayor's veto and the Mayor's previous legal arguments against this legislation have twice been rejected by the Louisiana Attorney General.

This legislation simply requires our city's contracting process (both Mayor's and Council's) to fully comply with state law - it does not take away the right of the Mayor to craft the contract review process, nor does it infringe on the Mayor's Executive Powers.

This issue is about transparency, fairness and making our government more responsive to the people. I intend to ask the Council to consider overriding the veto at our February 19th meeting."

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 Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; Council Vice-President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow ; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy S. Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.