

Legislation to Strengthen Minority and Women-Owned
Small Businesses in New Orleans
To be Introduced at May 7th Council Meeting

News Release

May 5, 2009

Contact:
Kate Schneiderman
Office of
Councilmember-at-Large
Arnie Fielkow
Ph: 504-658-1063
Cell: 504-905-9893
krschneiderman@cityofno.com

New Orleans
City Council

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)



New Orleans, LA - May 5, 2009 - At the May 7th regular New Orleans City Council meeting, Vice President Arnie Fielkow will introduce R-09-201 to strengthen opportunities for small businesses and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) to participate in city contracts. Best practices, such as those found through Atlanta's Office of Contract Compliance, are to be encouraged.

The Resolution requests that Administration representatives appear before the Council's June 9th Special Development Projects & Economic Development Committee to testify how the City can improve its utilization of small businesses and DBEs to fulfill City contracts and subcontracts. Other cities, such as Atlanta, have already successfully implemented various programs to encourage small business development.

Council Vice President Fielkow says, "One of the keys to economic growth is the development of small businesses, especially the historically disadvantaged minority- and women-owned small businesses. New Orleans already does a good job in requiring a percentage of all city contracts to go towards disadvantaged businesses, but hopefully we can continue to make strides to reach more minority businesses in this city."

He continues, "Additionally, with the expected increase in recovery dollars flowing to local governments, there are unparalleled opportunities for local small businesses to participate in the recovery projects. However, this will only happen to the fullest extent possible if small and disadvantaged businesses are better-positioned to take part in those projects. In a best case world, all of the recovery

contracts for the City of New Orleans should remain with local businesses."

Additionally, R-09-201 also asks the Administration to recommend potential changes to State and local law that would create programs to encourage small business development.

Currently, under State and City law, 10% of the total value of all City professional services contracts must be set aside for small business. Of that 10%, at least another 10% must be awarded to socially and economically disadvantaged businesses and at least another 10% be awarded to women-owned businesses. Additionally, the City of New Orleans has set its own goals for both construction and professional services contracts. Specifically, the City mandates that 20% of the total contract amount available each year be awarded to minority-owned firms and that 5% be awarded to women-owned enterprises.

R-09-201 will be introduced at the May 7th Council meeting and then forwarded to the Governmental Affairs Committee for full vetting.

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.