



Joint Jefferson-Orleans Parish Council Delegation Wraps Up Successful Meetings with Congressional Leaders

Group Optimistic Federal Officials Will Act to Fully Fund Critical Needs in the Region

News Release

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Washington, D.C. - October 31, 2007 - New Orleans Councilmen-at-large Arnie Fielkow and Michael C. Darnell together with Jefferson Parish Council Chairman Tom Capella concluded a series of successful meetings on Tuesday with key Congressional leaders in Washington, D.C. The regional delegation leaves the Capital encouraged by the support voiced by Congressional leaders.

"We made great progress on Capitol Hill this week, and I am optimistic the federal government will meet its obligation to fill the funding shortfall in the Road Home program," says Councilman Fielkow. "Coming to D.C. as a cohesive regional voice demonstrated that Southeast Louisiana is working together to make our home better and stronger than pre-Katrina. The pressing needs of our community transcend parish lines and it was important for Congress to understand that we are working together for the betterment of the region."

Fielkow continues, "Many thanks go to Senator Mary Landrieu and her staff for spearheading these key meetings and for her tremendous support of all Jefferson and Orleans Parish legislative priorities."

"The reception that we received on Capitol Hill was very positive and I am confident that the Leadership will begin to quickly address the pressing regional issues we discussed," says Councilman Michael C. Darnell.

"Specifically, our delegation outlined top priorities for the region including, fully funding the Road Home program, ensuring the full implementation of a 100-year storm protection system, and securing federal dollars to address the challenges we face in mental health and criminal justice."



Councilman Capella comments, "I think we had a very successful trip. The recovery has not been forgotten in Washington, but 2008 is a critical year for us. It was important for the nation's leaders to hear us speak in one voice. We need to take advantage of every opportunity for this type of coordination in the future."

During their day in Washington, Councilmen Fielkow, Darnell and Capella met with key leaders in the House and Senate including: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), Senior Staff of the Senate Homeland Security Committee, Senior Staff of Senator John Kerry's office, and Representatives Rodney Alexander (R-LA) and Charlie Melancon (D-LA).

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 Michael C. Darnell; Council District "A" Shelley Midura; Council District "B" Stacy S. Head; Council District "C" James Carter; Council District "D" Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and Council District "E" Cynthia Willard-Lewis.