

Council Vice President Fielkow  
To Introduce Resolution Urging State  
To Reconsider Rejection of Federal Health Care Stimulus Dollars

News Release

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New Orleans  
City Council

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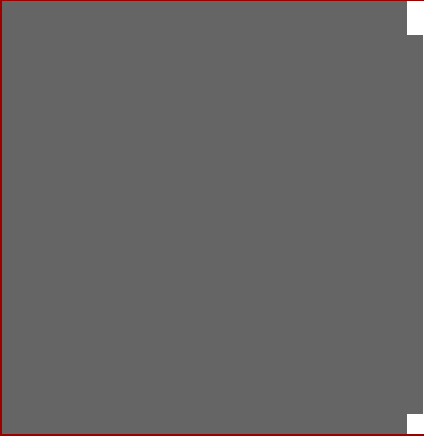


New Orleans, LA - April 1, 2009 - City Council Vice President Arnie Fielkow will introduce a Resolution at tomorrow's Council Meeting urging Governor Jindal and Louisiana Secretary of Health and Hospitals Alan Levine to reconsider their plan to reject millions of dollars in federal stimulus package funds designed to provide health benefits to Louisiana's poor, underinsured and uninsured.

The Resolution also calls for the State to hold public meetings on this issue in New Orleans and throughout Louisiana, enabling State policy makers to hear first-hand the impact that such actions will have on health care in Orleans Parish and the rest of the State.

"With Louisiana historically ranking at, or near, the bottom in national health and health care delivery statistics, it is disheartening that the State wants to reject extra funding for health care delivery," said Fielkow. "In New Orleans alone, we still have no hospital in the East, the potential new LSU/VA complex is years from completion and we are struggling with a hurting population that has limited access to affordable health care. While I understand the budget challenges faced by the State, the rejection of helpful federal dollars to support this struggling health care system is not a path we should follow."

The federal stimulus health care funds would extend the period of coverage for Transitional Medical Assistance (TMA) health care benefits to those leaving welfare and entering the workforce, and would also provide more money for Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH). DSH is a critical funding component in the Charity Hospital system.



"Rejecting this extra funding for transitional health benefits may be a disincentive to citizens leaving welfare to join the workforce because it makes it more difficult to maintain adequate health care coverage while searching for, and keeping, a job in today's troubled economic times," Fielkow added.

The Resolution will be introduced under suspension at tomorrow's regular City Council 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.