

New Orleans City Council

Councilmember-At-Large
Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson

**Councilmember-at-Large Clarkson
Joins Local, State and National Leaders
To Announce Legislation Authorizing Corps of Engineers
To Pursue Effective Outfall Canal Protection for New Orleans**

News Release

July 20, 2009

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City Council

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New Orleans, LA - July 20, 2009 -

Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson joined local, state, and national leaders today in announcing legislation filed in Congress authorizing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to pursue the most effective means of storm protection for New Orleans' three outfall canals.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has consistently argued that of three possible options for redeveloping the London Ave., Orleans Ave., and 17th St. canals, Congress

has authorized them to pursue only the cheaper "Option 1," which involves retaining deficient canal walls, relying on existing Sewerage and Water Board pumps to handle falling water, and constructing new pumps at the mouth of each canal to handle rising water.

Senators David Vitter, Mary Landrieu, and Barbara Boxer introduced the legislation today to put an end to that debate by expressly authorizing the Corps to pursue the more expensive and far safer "Option 2," which would deepen and repave the canals and build new all-purpose pumps, or "Option 2a," which includes these improvements and also allows for pumping excess water from the canals to the Mississippi River.

"This is a great step forward," said Councilmember Clarkson, who has been a strong advocate on this issue both in Washington, D.C. and in New Orleans. "We simply cannot allow the Corps to move forward on a 'cheaper', less effective plan that will end up putting our region at risk for dramatic costs in life and property."

She continued, "There is no real choice here. We simply need to follow the science and not the money. The important fact here is that lives and property will be lost or saved depending upon which method the Corps pursues. And what is the value of a life?"

In announcing this significant step forward, Councilmember Clarkson joined Senator David Vitter, Representative Steve Scalise, Jefferson Parish President Aaron Broussard, Jefferson Parish Councilman-at-Large John Young, and representatives from the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board in making this announcement.

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 S. Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.