

Council Vice President Fielkow
Opposes Louisiana House Bill No. 60:
Proposed Bill Not in the Best Interest of Adopted Children

News Release

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New Orleans
City Council

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New Orleans, LA - May 6, 2009 - At tomorrow's regular City Council meeting, Vice President Arnie Fielkow will bring up a Resolution opposing Louisiana House Bill No. 60.

House Bill No. 60 calls for changing the criteria under which the State of Louisiana issues a new birth certificate for an adopted child. Specifically, the proposed bill calls for a birth certificate to be issued

for an adopted child only to a married couple or single parent.

"So many children in both Louisiana and throughout the world need good homes and caring parents, and enacting legislation which penalizes potential gay adopting parents is both mean-spirited and not in the best interest of our children. House Bill No. 60 adds another layer to an already exhaustive process and potentially harms children in the future from receiving much-needed healthcare and social services," says Fielkow. "I feel that we should be making adoption easier, not harder, and ensuring that adopted children and parents are afforded the same rights, access to information and privileges as naturally-born children."

House Bill No. 60 may put the State of Louisiana at odds with a federal court ruling on this issue. Council Vice President Fielkow and his wife are the recent adoptive parents of two young girls from the Ukraine, and can personally attest to the difficulties in obtaining proper documentation for their children.

Critics of House Bill No. 60 point out that by denying some adoptive parents the right to be on their child's birth certificate, that family may face difficulties in registering their child for school, medical benefits or insurance.

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.