



OFFICE OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT ARNIE D. FIELKOW

November 3, 2009

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jaime Guillet
504-658-1063
504-957-2035
jlgillet@cityofno.com

Council President Arnie Fielkow Decries Dr. Ed Blakely's Statements to CALTV

New Orleans, LA – Below is a statement from New Orleans City Council President Arnie Fielkow regarding the comments by former New Orleans Recovery Chief, Dr. Ed Blakely to a West Coast online television station.

"I find the recent public comments made by former New Orleans Recovery Chief, Dr. Ed Blakely (to CALTV, the University of California-Berkeley's online television station) to be highly offensive, divisive, unprofessional and factually erroneous," said Fielkow. "Contrary to Dr. Blakely's opinions, I find New Orleanians to be among the most determined and resilient people I have ever encountered.

"Despite our personal and professional travails following the worst man-made disaster this country has ever experienced, New Orleanians to this day continue to persevere, to work hard and to undertake reforms so as to make this an even better community than it was before Katrina. It is a slap in the face to all of us who stayed and invested, as well as to the thousands of newcomers who now call New Orleans home post-Katrina, to suggest that New Orleans citizenry are lazy, unsophisticated or expect others to do the job. Contrary to Dr. Blakely's statements, it is precisely because of the indomitable spirit and will of New Orleanians that I believe our great city has an incredibly bright future and, if we stay unified, the potential to again evolve into one of the world's great cities," Fielkow said.

“New Orleans, not unlike other communities throughout urban America, still faces many challenges, including the ability to bring people together along racial and cultural lines. New Orleanians have the opportunity, especially in a post-Katrina environment, to successfully tackle this challenge through improvements such as ensuring equity in public education, economic development and public/environmental safety. Strides are being made and I wholeheartedly believe our collective community can, and will, be successful.

NOLA 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 council members 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 Head; District C Councilmember James Carter; District D Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District E Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.

###