

Email 3-22-11
Statement of
Brian Furness
House of Reps/Orleans
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French Quarter Citizens

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www.frenchquartercitizens.org

March 22, 2011

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Hon. Richard Gallot, Jr.
Chair, House and Governmental Affairs Committee
Louisiana House of Representatives
P. O. Box 94062
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Hon. Robert W. Kostelka
Chair, Senate and Governmental Affairs Committee
Louisiana Senate
P.O. Box 94183
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Dear Rep. Gallot and Senator Kostelka,

RE: 2011 Redistricting Special Session

I write as president of French Quarter Citizens, a community advocacy organization that since 1994 promoted strengthening residential quality of life and preservation of our historic community, Louisiana's oldest neighborhood. Our membership resides primarily in the French Quarter, but we are joined in our efforts by citizens from many areas and walks of life.

As you know, the French Quarter is a unique place with issues sometimes different from those of our neighbors. Despite our small geographic size, the French Quarter is now broken into two house districts (93 and 96) and two senate districts (3 and 5). This arrangement confuses voters and dilutes the voice of residents and businesses. While we appreciate the hard efforts and support of our elected legislators, FQC believes it is in the best interests of our members to be represented by one representative and one senator. We believe as well that such an arrangement would best serve the people and State of Louisiana: a single Representative and Senator would better ensure that issues affecting this district so important to the history and economic health of the city and state are brought to the attention of the legislators.

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A district encompassing the entire French Quarter would best take into account the following:

- The neighborhood's high population density
- Economic contribution to the State and City as a high-traffic tourist destination
- Historic status

Many of the issues we face are not, of course, unique to the French Quarter and, not coincidentally, affect many of our adjacent neighbors in Faubourg Tremé, Faubourg Marigny, the Central Business District and, to a somewhat lesser extent, in the Bywater and Lower Garden District. An argument could be made for grouping these neighborhoods based on shared characteristics and issues.

Regardless of the exact shape of the final districts, FQC respectfully requests you consider the commonality of interests of neighborhoods when drawing districts. Should you have any questions or need further comment, feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Brian R. Furness

Brian R. Furness

President

French Quarter Citizens, Inc.

cc: Orleans Parish Delegation

The Honorable Mitchell J. Landrieu, Mayor of the City of New Orleans
The Honorable Members of the City Council of the City of New Orleans
Carol Allen, President, Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents and Associates
Chris Costello, President, Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association
Chris Lorenzen, President, Bywater Neighborhood Association
Michele B. Braden, President, Esplanade Ridge-Treme Civic Association
Garden District Association