



Officers

Hans B. Jonassen
Chairman

Sterling Scott Willis
Vice Chairman

Robert W. Brown
Secretary

J. Kelly Duncan
Treasurer

Past Chairman

Lynes R. Sloss

President & CEO

Janet R. Howard

Board Members

Herschel L. Abbott, Jr.
Arnold B. Baker
James B. Barkate
Virginia Besthoff
Christian T. Brown
J. Storey Charbonnet
Edgar L. Chase III
Joan Coulter
Ludovico Feoli
Vaughan Fitzpatrick
Hardy B. Fowler
Aimee Adatto Freeman
Julie Livaudais George
Samuel A. Giberga
John C. Hope, III
Shelby P. LaSalle, Jr.
Mary Matalin
Mark A. Mayer
N. J. "Woody" Oge'
Nolan V. Rollins
Tiffany J. (T.J.) Thom
Ann Thorpe Thompson
Madeline D. West
Andrew B. Wisdom
Brent Wood
Alan J. Yacoubian

Honorary Board

Harry J. Blumenthal, Jr.
Louis M. Freeman
Richard W. Freeman, Jr.
Ronald J. French
David Guidry
Paul M. Haygood
Diana M. Lewis
Anne M. Milling
R. King Milling
George H. Porter III
Edward F. Stauss, Jr.

BUREAU OF GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH

938 Lafayette St., Suite 200
New Orleans, LA 70113
Phone 504-525-4152
Fax 504-525-4153
www.bgr.org

BGR MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release – December 14, 2009

Contact: Janet R. Howard, *President & CEO*
(504) 525-4152 x107

BGR Report Outlines Major Overhaul of Assessment System in New Orleans

The Bureau of Governmental Research today releases *In All Fairness: Building a Model Assessment System in New Orleans*. In the report, BGR looks at the steps the new citywide assessor must take to create a fair, efficient and transparent assessment system in Orleans Parish. The report is available on BGR's web site, www.bgr.org.

This spring, voters will elect a single assessor for all of Orleans Parish, ending the inefficient district-based system that has long failed to produce accurate assessments. These assessments have deprived the city of needed revenue, inflated tax rates and created inequitable tax burdens among residents.

Consolidation of the seven assessor offices is necessary for reform, but it does not guarantee it. *In All Fairness* calls for a major overhaul of the office's structure and practices. It makes recommendations aimed at reorganizing the office, identifying the highest quality personnel, revamping valuation methods, tackling nonprofit exemptions and educating the public on how the office operates. The report also calls on the Louisiana State Legislature, the city and the current assessors to address issues that will hamper the incoming assessor. In all, the report makes roughly two dozen recommendations critical to building an effective assessment system in New Orleans.

"Assessor consolidation opens the door to significant improvement of our assessment system," said BGR Chairman Hans B. Jonassen. "An effective office would strengthen the city's tax base, control millage rates and create equity among taxpayers. We shouldn't let this opportunity pass us by."

BGR is a private, nonprofit, independent research organization. Since its founding in 1932, it has been dedicated to informed public policy-making and the effective use of public resources in the Greater New Orleans area. For more information call 525-4152 or visit BGR's web site, www.bgr.org.