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## **BGR MEDIA RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release – March 22, 2007*

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### **BGR addresses Jefferson Parish millage propositions**

The Bureau of Governmental Research today releases *On the Ballot: Jefferson Parish Property Tax Propositions*, an analysis of three property tax propositions on the March 31, 2007 ballot. A brief description of each proposition and BGR's positions is provided below.

#### **School District #1**

The Jefferson Parish Public School System's property tax proposition would renew a parishwide four-mill tax for 10 years. The four mills would be dedicated as follows: one mill each to fund the Technology Department and to maintain existing public school buildings, and two mills for capital projects.

BGR is taking a position **FOR** the proposition. The millage is a long-standing part of the Jefferson Parish Public School System's budget. Eliminating it would further accentuate school system's dependence on the more volatile sales tax. BGR, however, is concerned by the school system's continued reliance on narrowly dedicated taxes.

#### **Consolidated Drainage District No. 2**

Approval of the ballot proposition would result in the renewal of 4.91 mills and an increase of 1.09 mills. The increase would offset a millage

roll-back, resulting from reassessments, and bring the tax back to the level at which it was passed 10 years ago. The drainage tax would be collected parishwide excepting Grand Isle.

BGR is taking a position **FOR** the proposition. The income is necessary to continue day-to-day drainage operations and upkeep of the drainage system. BGR is making the recommendation despite concerns about Jefferson Parish's excessive dependence on dedicated taxes.

### **Consolidated Recreation/Community and Playground District**

Approval of the ballot proposition would result in the renewal of 8.77 mills and an increase of 1.23 mills. The increase would offset a millage roll-back, resulting from reassessments, and bring the tax back to the level at which it was passed 10 years ago. Revenue would continue to fund neighborhood recreation facilities and programs throughout the parish. This tax does not fund the Alario Center, Lafreniere Park or Parc des Familles. This tax would apply in unincorporated Jefferson Parish and the town of Jean Lafitte.

BGR is taking a position **FOR** the proposition. The recreation millage provides virtually the sole source of revenue for leisure activities at neighborhood parks and community centers and the maintenance of facilities. Withdrawal of 90% of Parks and Recreation Department income would severely hamper the Parish's recreation functions. BGR is making the recommendation despite concerns about Jefferson Parish's excessive dependence on dedicated taxes.

“BGR has taken a position in favor of the propositions; it remains concerned that both the School Board and Parish Council rely heavily on dedicated property and sales tax revenues” said Poco Sloss, Chairman of the BGR Board. “Such dedications limit the ability of the School System and Parish to respond to changing circumstances.”

The report may be found on BGR's website, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org).

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 website, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org).

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