With gratitude, I complete my final year as Chairman of BGR's Board of Directors. I am thankful for the BGR staff, which produces exceptional work. I am thankful for my fellow Board members, whose service extends well beyond the ordinary. I am thankful for the many foundations, businesses and individuals for financial support that enables BGR's independence. And I am thankful for the many citizens who advocate for BGR's recommendations.

As I reflect on 2018, I am impressed by BGR's commitment to its strategic vision and the pace of organizational change. BGR identified, institutionalized and put into action an ambitious yet achievable plan for BGR's future. I am excited to watch it continue to unfold.

This year provided clear indicators of BGR's promising vision. BGR communicated better and more often, reaching supporters regularly with social media and The Daily Dispatch. We convened community leaders to learn of community-wide public policy concerns. We delivered our research in a variety of ways to engage a broader audience. We focused on financial sustainability and recruited an unprecedented Sustainer's Circle membership class.

In 2018, BGR again earned recognition by the Governmental Research Association, receiving awards for Outstanding Policy Achievement and Most Distinguished Research. BGR now has received more than 40 national awards for its research and reporting. These awards acknowledge the uncompromising work that is BGR's trademark.

As I leave my BGR post, I am thankful to have served this remarkable organization for over a decade. I pass the torch to Ludovico Feoli, who is BGR's incoming Chairman. I am confident that he will provide thoughtful leadership and that, under his guidance, BGR will continue down its path of excellence.

Hardy B. Fowler
Board Chair
OUR MISSION

The Bureau of Governmental Research is a private, nonprofit, independent research organization dedicated to informed public policy making and the effective use of public resources for the improvement of government in the New Orleans metropolitan area.

WHO WE ARE

BGR is an objective resource on local public policy. Since our founding in 1932, we have monitored and analyzed government policies, structures, finances and processes to identify critical issues requiring best-practice problem solving. BGR uncovers facts, frames issues and recommends solutions.

BGR transcends administrations and politics. We are governed by citizens and not part of, or controlled by, any government body. Our financial support comes from a mix of individuals, businesses and foundations. Our work remains independent of all of them. We are nonpartisan and do not endorse any candidates for public office.

WHAT WE DO

We have been a constructive voice in the local policy landscape for 86 years. During that time, we have issued more than 1,500 reports to improve government function. For decades, our work has laid the foundation for government reform initiatives. We have a legacy of organizational excellence.

WHY WE DO IT

A spotlight on public policy issues can reveal a better path forward. Policy outcomes improve when facts, research, and objective analysis inform the policymaking process. Citizen engagement provides the impetus for action by policymakers. Our reports provide transparency, an objective source of information, and the groundwork for advocacy. When these elements converge, outcomes improve for the benefit of those who live and work in the region. This is BGR’s work. The potential it creates for transformative change is BGR’s “why.”
OUR HISTORY

1930s
PAVING THE WAY TO EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT
As Huey Long’s political machine tightens its grip on New Orleans, a group of local citizens defy political pressure and form an organization “devoted to the study of public affairs” in January 1932. It would quickly grow to 300 members and change its name from the Civic Affairs League to the Bureau of Governmental Research. In this decade, facts uncovered by BGR play prominently in the federal investigation of the Louisiana Hayride scandals. BGR also proposes a modern mayor-council form of government for New Orleans.

1940s
MORRISON TAKES UP REFORMS
The election of New Orleans Mayor deLesseps “Chep” Morrison in 1946 opens the door to major city reforms. The new mayor implements BGR’s recommendations for administrative and police reforms. BGR research and recommendations help bring about the introduction of voting machines in Louisiana and the creation of New Orleans’ civil service system. The entire BGR staff is loaned to the State of Louisiana to prepare its first modern budget.

1950s
ENHANCING SELF-GOVERNANCE
New Orleans’ first home rule charter takes effect. BGR plays key roles in drafting the state constitutional amendment authorizing home rule and guiding the preparation of the charter itself. BGR Executive Director Val Mogensen serves as director of the Charter Commission. BGR also fosters formation of the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana to address statewide issues.

1960s
PRESERVING THE VIEUX CARRÉ
BGR completes a seven-volume study that lays a comprehensive foundation for preserving New Orleans’ historic French Quarter. The Vieux Carré Demonstration Grant Study is the most extensive single work in our history. It would serve as a guide for planning for both historical preservation and future growth in many other communities in the United States. During this time, BGR also assists St. Bernard Parish home rule charter efforts.

1970s
A PLAN FOR A BETTER ZOO
BGR publishes a study of ways to improve the facilities and operations of a deteriorated Audubon Zoo. The Audubon Park Commission implements the report’s recommendations, transforming the zoo into one of the nation’s best. BGR’s recommendations also assist New Orleans government in modernizing the City’s recordkeeping.

1980s
TURNING 50
BGR notes a general evolution in governmental research work. As more trained professionals enter public service, there is less need for privately-funded research on the methods of public administration. BGR repositions itself to analyze the “why” of governmental policy and programs. As citizens understand what government does, why it does it, what it costs and how it is paid for, they can call for improvements. In this period, BGR’s research uncovers errors in motor vehicle sales tax distribution to add $3.5 million to New Orleans revenues and informs New Orleans’ creation of a long-term capital improvement planning process.
1990s
ENCOURAGING EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT
BGR launches its Excellence in Government awards to honor public employees who have demonstrated outstanding performance and creative problem-solving to improve government in the New Orleans metro area. BGR research sparks State ethics and local professional services contracting reforms.

2000s
HARNESSING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT
Following Hurricane Katrina, and fueled by an engaged citizenry, BGR’s research leads to the long-awaited consolidation of New Orleans’ seven elected assessors and a charter amendment to improve the planning process. BGR also reports pre-Katrina on Sewerage and Water Board privatization efforts.

2010s
RESEARCH WITH A BROAD PERSPECTIVE
BGR celebrates its 80th birthday having achieved several recent improvements to local government, including city contracting reforms based on BGR’s professional services contracting model. BGR continues work on key issues of interest throughout the metro area, including tax assessments and exemptions, public pension plans, public school finances, Sewerage and Water Board governance, and infrastructure.

A TRANSFORMATIVE GIFT
A New BGR Endowment
This year marked a historic development for BGR. The Zemurray Foundation pledged $2 million to endow the position of BGR’s president and CEO. This is the largest gift in BGR’s 86-year history. It is transformative for the financial sustainability it introduces.

BGR is immensely grateful for the Zemurray Foundation’s generosity. The Foundation’s philanthropic leadership in the community has significantly benefitted a host of nonprofits and their noble endeavors. BGR is honored to accept this gift and stand among the Zemurray Foundation’s grant recipients.

In creating this endowment, the Zemurray Foundation noted BGR’s strong tradition of independence, non-partisanship and commitment to research. The Foundation intends for the endowment to acknowledge the invaluable role BGR and its staff have played in research leadership from BGR’s origin to date. The Zemurray Foundation is also making a strong statement about the centrality of independent research for informed public policy making and the effective use of public resources.

The endowment creates the Samuel Zemurray Chair in Research Leadership. The Foundation has named the chair after Samuel Zemurray to honor the legacy of disinterested philanthropy that he pursued, mostly anonymously, to advance education and scholarship, among other causes.

BGR remains true to its original purpose, providing objective, nonpartisan research and recommendations to pave the way to more effective local government.
BGR’s program of work consists of two primary components: (1) monitoring local government; and (2) public policy research and reporting. These components inform one another and drive our work cycle.

**Monitoring Local Government**

During 2018, BGR monitored more than 70 government entities in Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany Parishes. We regularly reviewed meeting agendas, observed meetings when agenda items warranted closer inspection and captured significant developments for further discussion and analysis. We also monitored the Louisiana Legislature to identify bills of local significance.

Monitoring helps BGR stay abreast of current issues, identify new ones and understand the dynamics that affect decision-making by public officials. Monitoring allows BGR to craft a highly relevant annual work plan. It also creates the opportunity for BGR to speak to some issues as they develop, with the goal of improving the policy under consideration.

**Public Policy Research & Reporting**

Objective, nonpartisan public policy research is BGR’s hallmark. Our reports externalize BGR’s daily work and inform citizens, decision makers and the media about policy issues that are significant to the New Orleans metropolitan area. We released the following reports in 2018:

- **On the Ballot: St. Tammany Parish Tax Renewals** analyzed and provided voter guidance on two separate parishwide sales taxes, one to renew a sales tax dedicated to parish courthouse facilities and another to renew the sales tax dedicated to the parish jail. March 2, 2018.

- **City Council Members Should Regulate, Not Govern, the S&WB** addressed the legislative delegation to oppose a bill that sought to allow a member of the City Council to sit on the S&WB board of directors, and to urge instead that the City Council serve in the capacity of independent regulator of the S&WB. April 9, 2018.
On the Ballot: West Jefferson Levee District Property Tax analyzed and provided voter guidance on a proposed new property tax for the West Jefferson Levee District to cover the increased costs of raising and armorizing levees and maintaining pump stations. April 10, 2018.

From Answers to Action: Post-Election Policy Making revisited BGR's Candidate Q&A Election Series to consolidate the responses of New Orleans’ newly elected officials on critical issues and thereby provide a roadmap for action and a basis for accountability. June 4, 2018.

Public Contributions to Convention Center Hotel Demand Scrutiny provided an analytical framework for evaluating the necessity and size of requested public contributions to design, build and operate a new hotel attached to the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. July 19, 2018.

Open Letter in Response to Convention Center Consultant’s Analysis of Hotel Proposal set forth BGR's concerns about a consultant’s analysis of the feasibility and economic impact of a proposed convention center hotel. September 13, 2018.

On the Ballot: Jefferson Parish Tax Renewals analyzed and provided voter guidance in three separate reports on property tax renewals for drainage, juvenile services, and animal shelter and health services. October 24, 2018.

On the Ballot: Property Tax Phase-in Constitutional Amendment analyzed and provided voter guidance on a proposed constitutional amendment for phasing in property taxes on properties that experience large increases in assessed values. October 24, 2018.

BGR's pipeline includes a report on the Orleans Parish hotel tax structure, a report on the progress made by the Orleans Parish assessor toward improving property valuations and assessment administration, and a report that provides an in-depth picture of revenues that fund Orleans Parish public schools.
BGR’s completion of a report triggers the next phase of work, where we shift our focus from research and analysis to implementation of BGR’s recommendations. We promote our work so it is positioned to capture the attention of citizens and policymakers. We publish our reports on our website, distribute them to an email list of thousands of engaged citizens and encourage readership through social media. We invite members of the media to talk with us. We participate in radio, television and newspaper interviews and present our findings to community leaders and citizen groups.

The ultimate measure of success for BGR is the extent to which government bodies adopt our policy recommendations and government improves as a result. Media coverage is an indicator of how well we are moving toward that goal.

In the News

We are succeeding in our efforts to make our work more visible and accessible through media coverage. As we near the end of 2018, media outlets have cited BGR’s work 70 times, which is 13% more than the same period in 2017. BGR’s research and public policy forums generated citations in 42 news media articles in the second half of 2018 through November, which is a 59% increase from the first half of the year. The citations spanned ten news media outlets in a broad array of formats, including print, television, radio and online.

![BGR 2018 News Media Citations Graph](image)

GRA Awards

In 2018, BGR was recognized by its national peers for the 12th year in a row. At its national conference, the Governmental Research Association (GRA) presented BGR with the Outstanding Policy Achievement award for the 2016 report *Reducing the Cost of Tomorrow: A Practical Guide to Pension Reform in Jefferson, Orleans and St. Tammany Parishes*. BGR also earned the award for Most Distinguished Research for its 2017 report *Paying for Streets: Options for Funding Road Maintenance in New Orleans*.

Impact

- **$1.0M**: At least $1 million a year in lower pension costs
- **$39M**: $39 million in school funding redistributed
- **10**: Number of policy results that have received national recognition
A Strategic Vision

BGR formally adopted *A Strategic Vision for Organizational Excellence*, which consists of vision statements in several key areas, including membership, communication, implementation, performance measurement, community engagement and diversity. We identified specific ways to improve the way we do our work and have begun shifting organizational behaviors to align with our new vision. BGR is rethinking and updating many of its modes of execution – innovating across the board – with the goal of achieving even greater organizational effectiveness.

President’s Gathering of Community Leaders

BGR recognized that its work would benefit from a dialogue with community leaders about policy issues of concern to the community. We responded by creating a biannual forum, the *President’s Gathering of Community Leaders*, to convene leaders of nonprofit, charitable, educational and community organizations from the greater New Orleans area. At each event, BGR discusses its initiatives and priorities and solicits feedback on its work and work plan.

The Daily Dispatch

BGR identified the need for a dashboard of policy developments, particularly as they relate to BGR’s recommendations, and created *The Daily Dispatch*. This daily round-up of news media items has become valuable to our members as a convenient and comprehensive source for daily policy updates.

InBrief

BGR created *InBrief*, a companion to BGR’s longer reports. *InBrief* summarizes an entire report in a page or two and distills the analysis into a more accessible format. *InBrief* conveniently engages citizens while encouraging the more in-depth understanding that results from the full report.

BGR.org

BGR’s website is a critical access point for our work. It houses our online library of reports. To improve our website’s utility, we recreated it. Citizens can more easily access our reports. The search for information is more intuitive. Our website now provides more information about us, our work and its purpose.

Social Media and Infographics

BGR recognized that social media and infographics are important tools for extending the reach of our work. We are now using both to create and capture interest. We include charts, graphs and visual depictions in our reports and repackage them for social media.
BGR's Breakfast Briefings are public forums where citizens hear from experts and policy makers on significant public policy issues. The series builds on BGR's core work of monitoring and reporting, while engaging about 175 citizens at each event. In 2018, BGR presented four Breakfast Briefing events, sponsored by IBERIABANK.

**Dr. Henderson Lewis, Jr.**
Superintendent, Orleans Parish School Board
**Taking Stock: Three Years of Change at Orleans Parish School Board**
March 22, 2018

**Dr. Cade Brumley**
Superintendent, Jefferson Parish Public School System
**Love to Learn, Learn to Lead: A 100-day Investment for a Stronger Jefferson Parish Public School System**
May 31, 2018

**LaToya Cantrell**
Mayor, City of New Orleans
**The First One Hundred Days in Office**
September 18, 2018

**John Bel Edwards**
Governor, State of Louisiana
**State Priorities of Local Importance**
November 13, 2018
Since 1994, BGR has hosted the Excellence in Government Awards to honor creative, dedicated public employees and extraordinary private citizens who have made significant strides in improving local government. On May 11, 2018, BGR hosted the biennial event and recognized outstanding performance and creative problem solving by its honorees.

A committee of BGR Board members selected the award winners following a public call for nominations and a competitive process. BGR issued ten awards in four categories: Merit, Innovation, Lifetime Achievement and Citizenship. The 2018 honorees represented the best in public service and civic activism in a diverse range of fields. Canal Barge sponsored the 2018 Excellence in Government Awards.

In November 2018, BGR hosted its first BGR Social, an event for young professionals to introduce them to BGR’s work. The event featured a moderated discussion by New Orleans City Council members, who talked about key policy issues, explained opportunities for young citizens to become engaged with the policy making process, and answered questions posed by attendees. Corporate Realty and The Domain Companies co-sponsored the event.

BGR’s 2018 Annual Luncheon featured Michael Leiter, who served as the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center under presidents Bush and Obama. Mr. Leiter presented to an engaged audience of BGR supporters on “Counterterrorism and Cybersecurity: National Security Challenges for the Present and the Future.” Hancock Whitney Bank and Latter & Blum co-sponsored the Annual Luncheon, which is BGR’s sole fundraising event.
BGR respects the intent of the members and foundations that support us for their donations to further our mission and impact. We are judicious in our spending and deploy a significant majority of our dollars to our program of work.

We annually engage an independent certified public accountant to audit our financial statements. The most recent audit of BGR's financial statements, prepared by LaPorte CPAs & Business Advisors, was for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2017 and resulted in an unqualified opinion. We provide below some highlights from the audit.

BGR's net assets have grown 30% in the past 5 years. From 2016 to 2017, net assets grew by 15%.

In 2017, BGR received $1.2 million of unrestricted revenues to fund its operations. BGR spent a total of $896,000 on research staff and other program expenses, general and administrative costs and fundraising expenses. BGR's programmatic expenses accounted for $629,000, 70% of the total.

Our 2018 audited financial statement will be available mid-year. Based on our financial performance to date, BGR has raised revenue in excess of its budgeted goal, expenses are below budget and net assets have continued to grow. We have prioritized and are achieving financial sustainability for our organization.
BGR gratefully acknowledges the following members for their generous support in 2018.

**SUSTAINERS’ CIRCLE MEMBERS ($25,000+)**

Boysie Bollinger  
J. Storey Charbonnet  
Hardy B. Fowler

Eugenie & Joseph  
Jones Family Foundation

The RosaMary  
Foundation

The Zemurray  
Foundation

**OUR MEMBERSHIP**
OUR MEMBERSHIP

PRESIDENT’S ROUNDTABLE MEMBERS ($10,000+)

Richard C. Adkerson Family Foundation
Leslie Jacobs
Keller Family Foundation

New Orleans Saints
Ella West Freeman Foundation
New Orleans Pelicans

EDITORS’ FRONTLINE MEMBERS ($5,000+)

BARRASSO • USDIN • KUPPERMAN FREEMAN & SARVER, L.L.C. & STEVEN W. USDIN

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Membership is as of publication date.
As Toya Barnes-Teamer, Storey Charbonnet and Mark Mayer conclude their Board service at the end of this year, BGR extends gratitude to them for their significant contributions to our organization.
Amy Glovinsky — President & CEO
Amy became President & CEO of BGR in early 2016. She began her professional career at Jones Walker, LLP, where she was a commercial litigation partner. In 2006, she entered the public policy arena as an adviser to business and community leaders on best practice government reform. She received BA and JD degrees from Louisiana State University with multiple distinctions.

Stephen Stuart — Vice President & Research Director
Stephen graduated with a Bachelor of Accountancy from Loyola University New Orleans. Prior to joining BGR, he worked as a local reporter covering business, economic development and local government issues. He has been part of the BGR research team for 16 years, having joined the staff as a Research Analyst in 2002.

Susie Dudis — Research Analyst
Susie received a MS and Ph.D in International Development from Tulane University and a BA in Economics from Pomona College. Before joining BGR in 2017, she worked for education organizations in New Orleans and India and as a research assistant on a U.S. Department of Labor grant in West Africa.

Paul Naylor — Research Analyst
Paul graduated with a BA in Arabic Language from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, UK and earned a Ph.D from the Department of African Studies and Anthropology at the University of Birmingham, UK. Before joining BGR in 2018, he worked as an Adjunct Professor at Tulane University and in the media sector as a researcher, translator and editing assistant.

Jamie Cortez Parker — Research Analyst
Jamie earned a JD from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law and a BA in Political Science from Louisiana Tech University. Before joining BGR in 2013, she worked as a Project Manager at GCR Inc. and as an attorney.

Paul Rioux — Research Analyst
Paul received a BA in Math and Philosophy from St. Olaf College and an MA in American Studies from Purdue University. He joined BGR in 2012 and, for the 17 years before, worked as newspaper reporter covering government.

Selva Riemann — Office Manager
Selva earned a BA from California College of the Arts. She joined BGR in 2014, after having worked as Program Coordinator for the Jefferson Chamber of Commerce, Operations Coordinator for the Arts Council of New Orleans, and Coordinator of International Business and Trade Development for GNO, Inc.

Marci Schramm — Director of Membership and Engagement
Marci holds a BA in Business Administration from Wayne State University. Prior to joining BGR, she served as the Executive Director of French Quarter Festivals, Inc., Executive Director of New Orleans Opera and Corporate Events Planner for Entergy Corporation.

As Toya Barnes-Teamer, Storey Charbonnet and Mark Mayer conclude their Board service at the end of this year, BGR extends gratitude to them for their significant contributions to our organization.
“Open, honest and effective government is the foundation for progress in our region. BGR provides the independent, nonpartisan, and unbiased oversight, research and reporting critical to citizen confidence in government transparency and accountability.”

— Jay Lapeyre, President, Laitram, LLC

“BGR consistently produces highly credible and impactful nonpartisan research which provides a critical background and presents actionable solutions. Recent reports on financial stewardship and school tax renewals have served as important resources for our ongoing work at OPSB. I’m always appreciative of the opportunity to work with BGR and greatly value their work.”

— Dr. Henderson Lewis, Jr., Superintendent, Orleans Parish School Board

“What I appreciate most about the work of BGR is its focus on the details of how government works, or should work. BGR tackles the finer points that are crucial to the effective function of our City and the appropriate stewardship of the public’s resources. I rely on BGR for thorough, thoughtful and objective analysis of issues that will matter in the long term and have implications for our city 50 years from now.”

— Meg Lousteau, Executive Director, Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents and Associates

“An informed citizenry is a vital component to a healthy democracy. BGR’s independent and nonpartisan research and reporting serve a crucial function in ensuring that the people, policy makers and elected officials in our region are armed with the facts they need to make sound decisions.”

— Dr. John Nicklow, President, The University of New Orleans

“BGR’s voice in public policy dialogue is unique and critical, because of the comprehensive and systematic approach it employs in examining often unpopular and not well understood challenges confronting the Greater New Orleans region. Its work routinely informs and influences our decision-making process, policy formulation, and advocacy strategies. BGR is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in intelligent policy analysis and practical options for change.”

— Coleman D. Ridley, Jr., Managing Director, Business Council of New Orleans & The River Region
2018 MEMBERSHIP FORM

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL
I am supporting BGR’s core operations by becoming a member at the following level:

☐ Sustainers’ Circle ($25,000+)
☐ President’s Roundtable ($10,000+)
☐ Editor’s Frontline ($5,000+)
☐ Municipal Monitor ($2,500+)
☐ Policy Enthusiast ($1,250+)
☐ Research Corps ($600+)
☐ BGR Supporter ($250+)
☐ BGR Supporter Welcome Rate ($100+)
New Member Only
☐ BGR Young Advocate ($30+)
Members in their 20s and 30s
☐ Other contribution $__________

Within my membership level, my contribution is $__________

Visit www.bgr.org for a description of member benefits.

MY MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTION IS FOR:

☐ One year.
I understand BGR will contact me regarding annual renewal of my membership.

☐ The first year of a three-year pledge.
I pledge a three-year membership commitment. I will pay the first year now and authorize BGR to invoice me for years two and three for the amount specified above.

MEMBER INFORMATION
Membership Type:

☐ Individual
☐ Corporation/Business Entity

I would like my name and/or organization to appear in public BGR membership lists as:

Name ____________________________
Organization ____________________
(if applicable)

My contact information is:

Address: _________________________
_______________________________

City: ____________________________
State: ___________ Zip: __________
Phone: _________________________
Email: _________________________

☐ I prefer for my membership to remain anonymous.

PAYMENT INFORMATION
I would like to:

☐ Print this form and mail a check to: Bureau of Governmental Research ATTN: Membership 1055 St. Charles Ave., Suite 200 New Orleans, LA 70130

☐ Pay by credit card: Please contact BGR Member Services, 504-525-4152 ext. 108

For a full description of member benefits and to join online please visit bgr.org/membership.
Stay in touch — there are many ways to connect with us.

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Bureau of Governmental Research

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