



New Orleans and Jefferson Parish Propositions, December 6, 2014

ON DECEMBER 6, voters in Orleans Parish will decide the fate of a tax dedicated to the upkeep of schools in New Orleans. Voters in Jefferson Parish will decide on 11 propositions to amend the parish charter. The following are BGR's positions.

The full report is available at www.bgr.org.

ORLEANS PARISH

SCHOOL FACILITIES TAX

BGR Position: FOR. With new and renovated schools coming on line, the need for regular repair and replacement of New Orleans' school facilities is growing once again. The tax proposition would go a long way toward avoiding past practices of neglect and ensuring that school buildings are preserved for generations of students to come.

JEFFERSON PARISH CHARTER AMENDMENTS

PROPOSITION 1: PARISH COUNCIL INVESTIGATIONS

BGR Position: FOR. Proposition 1 would remove unnecessary subjectivity from the council's investigatory powers under the charter.

PROPOSITION 2: PARISH PRESIDENT

BGR Position: FOR. The full-time work requirement and the constraints on outside employment and compensation are appropriate given the scale of Jefferson Parish government.

PROPOSITION 3: LAYOVERS OF ORDINANCES

BGR Position: AGAINST. Proposition 3 would eliminate a charter safeguard that ensures that the public receives adequate notice of proposed ordinances in the newspaper. While citizens can currently access summaries and notice on the council's website, the practice of posting them is subject to change.

PROPOSITION 4: LAW ENFORCEMENT DISTRICT

BGR Position: NO POSITION. The amendment would remove any ambiguity in the charter relative to the exclusion of the Law Enforcement District from the parish finance director's purview. However, the amendment is unnecessary because the district is not part of parish government.

PROPOSITION 5: PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

BGR Position: NO POSITION. Proposition 5 is a mixed bag. On the plus side, the proposition would more clearly define the scope of the civil service system in parish government. It would expand the system's governing board, potentially broadening its viewpoints. It would also give the inspector general independent control over his staff. However, the proposition also

takes the undesirable steps of enshrining the Personnel Director's classified status in the charter and imposing an overly restrictive one-term limit on board members. In addition, it would declassify the remaining classified positions in the parish attorney's office without a clear reason for doing so.

PROPOSITION 6: PARISH ATTORNEY AND SPECIAL COUNSEL

BGR Position: NO POSITION. This proposition presents a mixed bag for voters. On the one hand, it would give the parish attorney greater flexibility in hiring and firing staff, subject to the check and balance of minimum qualifications set by the council. It would also bolster the parish attorney's authority to protect the parish's interests in legal matters. On the other hand, the proposition would enshrine in the charter the council's unfettered discretion to hire special legal counsel. Allowing such hiring without a demonstrated need increases the risk of patronage and unnecessary expense for the parish.

PROPOSITION 7: PLANNING AND ZONING BOARDS

BGR Position: FOR. Proposition 7 would allow for the possible expansion of the parish planning board's duties, although no specific expansion proposal is on the table. The proposition would also expand the possible range of duties of boards and commissions created by the council.

PROPOSITION 8: INSPECTOR GENERAL

BGR Position: FOR. Proposition 8 would increase the independence and the fiscal stability of the Office of Inspector General and head off possible conflicts between that office and other parish entities over investigations.

PROPOSITION 9: UNIVERSITY NAME CORRECTIONS

BGR Position: FOR. Making a technical amendment to correctly reflect names is appropriate.

PROPOSITION 10: PARISH HOSPITALS AND JEDCO

BGR Position: AGAINST. While taking measures to preserve the capital from the sale or lease of hospital assets is a good idea, the proposition is unnecessarily restrictive. In addition, the proposition would insulate the hospital districts' current structure and organization from change and consolidate the Parish Council's current control over the districts. Given the serious problems manifested in the recent attempts to lease the parish's hospitals, protecting the status quo is unwise.

PROPOSITION 11: CHARTER COMMITTEE RECORDS

BGR Position: FOR. Safekeeping of historical records of charter reviews is desirable.



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BGR POSITIONS

ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL FACILITIES TAX | FOR

JEFFERSON PARISH CHARTER AMENDMENTS

PROPOSITION 1: PARISH COUNCIL INVESTIGATIONS | **FOR**

PROPOSITION 2: PARISH PRESIDENT | **FOR**

PROPOSITION 3: LAYOVERS OF COUNCIL ORDINANCES | **AGAINST**

PROPOSITION 4: LAW ENFORCEMENT DISTRICT | **NO POSITION**

PROPOSITION 5: PARISH PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION | **NO POSITION**

PROPOSITION 6: PARISH ATTORNEY AND SPECIAL COUNSEL | **NO POSITION**

PROPOSITION 7: PLANNING AND ZONING BOARDS | **FOR**

PROPOSITION 8: INSPECTOR GENERAL | **FOR**

PROPOSITION 9: UNIVERSITY NAME CORRECTIONS | **FOR**

PROPOSITION 10: PARISH HOSPITALS AND JEDCO | **AGAINST**

PROPOSITION 11: CHARTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECORDS | **FOR**