

ORLEANS PARISH DEMOCRATIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESS RELEASE

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July 25, 2008 Democratic Party Endorsements Begin

New Orleans, LA - The 2008-2012 Orleans Parish Democratic Executive Committee (OPDEC) issued its first round of endorsements after a candidate forum organized for a meeting of more than 50 OPDEC members - this was the first endorsement meeting since the new committee was elected in February. OPDEC forums are open to the public, and the participants offered thoughtful responses to questions prepared by the Committee.

OPDEC members Karen Carter Petersen and Jason Hughes spoke on behalf of Senators Obama and Landrieu respectively, who were endorsed by voice vote, along with Judge Roland Belsome. Stephanie Butler read a letter from Congressman Jefferson, who was in Washington.

District 2 candidates participating in the forum were James Carter, who secured the OPDEC endorsement later in the evening, and Troy Carter, Jimmy Fahrenholz, Cedric Richmond, and Kenya Smith. The District 2 forum revealed an energetic field, and OPDEC's Chair James Gray reflected the mood of the entire body when he said that the candidates who participated were all impressive.

The 1st Congressional District's Jim Harlan received OPDEC's endorsement. A spirited forum for the DA's race offered former Judge Leon Cannizarro an opportunity to emphasize his goals to prioritize violent offender cases, and divert non-violent youth into drug treatment and training programs. Ralph Capitelli emphasized his 30 years of experience as a prosecutor and administrator in the DA's office. Promising to be an agent of change, Jason Roger Williams won the endorsement.

Other Judicial races are part of a forum on Monday July 28th. School Board races will be considered on Thursday August 7th. The forums begin promptly at 6pm in the Jury Pool Room of Civil District Court.

"As elected party officials in touch with the day-to-day issues citizens face," explains OPDEC Chairman, James Gray, "our endorsement represents support for the candidate that we believe would best represent our constituents with the utmost respect for Democratic values."

Deborah Langhoff, OPDEC's Vice Chair, adds that the endorsement includes the promise of get out the vote efforts coordinated by OPDEC members. "We will do everything in our power to elect our Democratic candidate and further the Democratic Party's agenda, which emphasizes the security of our nation, strong economic growth, affordable health care for all Americans, retirement security, honest government, and civil rights."

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