

ST. TAMMANY PARISH COUNCIL

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION COUNCIL SERIES NO. C-1566

COUNCIL SPONSOR MR. GOULD PROVIDED BY COUNCIL OFFICE

RESOLUTION OBJECTING TO THE OFFENSIVE REMARKS OF IDAHO SENATOR LARRY CRAIG AND RECOMMENDING THE CITIZENS OF ST. TAMMANY PARISH AND THE STATE OF LOUISIANA BOYCOTT PRODUCTS FROM THE STATE OF IDAHO UNTIL AN APOLOGY IS RECEIVED.

WHEREAS, U.S. Senator Larry Craig from the State of Idaho was quoted telling his home state constituents "fraud is in the culture of Iraqis. I believe that is true in the State of Louisiana as well" and "Louisiana and New Orleans are the most corrupt governments in our country and they always have been" by the Lewiston (Idaho) Morning Tribune and McCall (Idaho) Star News on October 13, 2005; and

WHEREAS, such ignorant, insulting and hurtful comments are offensive to the hardworking and honorable people of St. Tammany Parish and the State of Louisiana, who are struggling so hard to rebuild their communities following the worst natural disaster to strike this nation; and

WHEREAS, Senator Craig's comments are especially worrisome to the people of this parish because his stereotyping and blatant bias against the people of this state may be further advanced through his membership on the Senate Appropriations Committee which makes recommendations for hurricane-related spending by the federal government; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate for the citizens of this parish, through its parish council, to publically object to Senator Craig's comments and respond in kind by demanding a public apology to the people of St. Tammany Parish and the State of Louisiana from Senator Craig and recommending the boycott of products from the State of Idaho until said apology is received.

THE PARISH OF ST. TAMMANY HEREBY RESOLVES to object to the offensive remarks of Idaho Senator Larry Craig and recommend the citizens of St. Tammany Parish and the State of Louisiana boycott products from the State of Idaho until an apology from Senator Craig is received.

THIS RESOLUTION HAVING BEEN SUBMITTED TO A VOTE, THE VOTE THEREON WAS AS FOLLOWS:

MOVED FOR ADOPTION BY _____, SECONDED BY _____

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

THIS RESOLUTION WAS DECLARED ADOPTED ON THE ____ DAY OF _____ 2005, AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL, A QUORUM OF THE MEMBERS BEING PRESENT AND VOTING.

STEVE STEFANCIK, COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

DIANE HUESCHEN, COUNCIL CLERK

Reso C-1566

Idaho senator says fraud part of La. culture

More lawmakers join debate on storm relief plan

By Bill Walsh
Washington bureau

WASHINGTON — A U.S. senator from Idaho is the latest to slam Louisiana's reputation for political corruption as Congress considers whether to spend billions of dollars on hurricane recovery.

Sen. Larry Craig, a Republican, told his home state constituents that fraud is as much a part of the fabric of Louisiana as it is in Iraq and that flooded sections of New Orleans should be abandoned.

"Fraud is in the culture of Iraqis. I believe that is true in the state of Louisiana as well," Craig was quoted as saying Thursday in the Lewiston (Idaho) Morning Tribune.

The McCall (Idaho) Star News, quoted him saying "Louisiana and New Orleans are the most corrupt governments in our country and they always have been. . . . A rookie cop in New Orleans, they pay him or her \$17,000 starting pay and then wink and say you better make the rest of it on the street."

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Craig is in a position to back up his opinions with actions by withholding support for hurricane-related spending.

Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La. blasted Craig's comments as "old stereotypes" and "ignorant remarks." But Louisiana's sometimes shady political past has clearly become part of the hurricane-recovery debate in Congress.

Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo., has urged his colleagues not to let Louisiana politicians get their hands on the \$62 billion appropriated so far because of "mind-boggling incompetence" in dealing with the storm and Louisiana's "long history of corruption."

Earlier this week, Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, was slightly more diplomatic, but just as worried. Collins, chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, urged Senate leaders to quickly take up legislation to strengthen oversight of hurricane-related spending. She said it is becoming "increasingly evident" that federal relief efforts are "vulnerable to widespread abuse and waste." As Craig toured his state during the congressional recess, he also had some thoughts on redeveloping New Orleans that may be worrisome to people in flood ravaged neighborhoods contemplating rebuilding.

The Morning Tribune quoted him as saying there is growing Senate support for abandoning whole sections of New Orleans flooded by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He mentioned the Lower Ninth Ward as an example.

"I'm not humorous when I suggest we should turn it back to what it was, a wetland," Craig was quoted as saying.

The comment echoed a remark by House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., in the days after Katrina hit Aug. 29. He said that whole neighborhoods of the city should be bulldozed.

Landrieu conceded that the state has a checkered political past, but also noted other states with ethically challenged politicians. She mentioned House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Texas, who was recently indicted on money laundering and conspiracy charges.

She called Craig's references to the Ninth Ward, "absolutely offensive."

"I remain hopeful that these hurtful remarks were not reported as he intended," Landrieu said.

A Craig spokesman said Friday that the senator stands by the comments, but the spokesman added they weren't intended to reflect on Landrieu personally.

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Bill Walsh can be reached at
bill.walsh@newhouse.com or

There are a lot of choice words that Louisianians could use to reply to Idaho Sen. Larry Craig's ignorant and mean-spirited attack on this state, but frankly, our mamas taught us not to use that kind of language.

They also taught us not to kick people when they are down or repeat things we aren't sure are true. If Sen. Craig received similar home-training, he seems to have forgotten it.

"Fraud is in the culture of Iraqis. I believe that is true in the state of Louisiana as well," the senator told the Lewiston (Idaho) Morning Tribune.

That's beyond offensive. Louisiana's culture is rich and diverse, a source of pride for the entire country. Our culture is jazz, Mardi Gras and food that rises to the level of artistry — something that even people raised on a diet of potatoes ought to be able to appreciate.

Sen. Craig said Louisiana and New Orleans have "the most corrupt governments in our country." That's absurd. Certainly Louisiana has had its share of scandals, but so have plenty of other places. Our culture is not about fraud, and neither are the administrations of Mayor Ray Nagin and Gov. Kathleen Blanco.

He offered as fact a fictional account of a New Orleans rookie cop getting paid a \$17,000 starting salary and being told to "make the rest of it on the street." Too bad he didn't bother to learn the truth before blithely assassinating our character. Starting pay for a New Orleans police officer is \$30,000, and our accents don't sound like those of the characters in "The Big Easy" either.

Our mamas also told us that sticks and stones can break our bones, but names can never hurt us. Unfortunately, that's one of the few times they were wrong. Sen. Craig sits on the Senate Appropriations Committee. His comments could carry weight with other senators who are concerned that relief and recovery money will be misspent.

Sen. Mary Landrieu took Sen. Craig to task for what she called "ignorant remarks," but also charitably suggested that they were "not reported as he intended." A spokesman for the senator said he stands by his comments but that they weren't intended to reflect on Sen. Landrieu personally.

We've got news for you, Sen. Craig. The people of Louisiana take your remarks very personally. We're waiting for your apology.

Think outside the icebox

Re: "The Uptown refrigerator wars." Living, Oct. 18.

Chris Rose needs to get a grip and stop his whining. Everyone has been affected by Katrina, Lady Destruction. Must we be subjected to Mr. Rose's tirades about wasting away without his modern conveniences while others are throwing away personal belongings and gutting their homes, finding their businesses ruined or losing their jobs?

People who have lost a lot more than air conditioning or hot food for a couple of weeks speak more about the beauty of New Orleans, and the amazing potential for our city than does Mr. Rose. And they do it in an eloquent, witty manner.

There are plenty of stories to be told. I challenge Chris Rose to suck it up, adjust and overcome. Write outside the box and seek the real stories on the streets. He can still try to be funny.

Amy Gelpi
New Orleans

Homes laid to waste

Jefferson Parish President Aaron Broussard shouldn't waste that \$38,000 on ads. He should give it to homeowners who flooded, even if it would be a drop in the bucket. Better a drop in the bucket than a flooded home.

We evacuated with our handicapped son and daughter, only to come home to total devastation. My children could not even go into our home. They are disconnected and confused; they no longer have anything familiar that they can call their own. My heart hurts for them, more than our monumental loss of home and property. What a waste, waste, waste!

Don't run for re-election, Aaron Broussard. The only run you should have is to be run out of town on a rail.

Mildred R. Munsch
Metairie

WRITE:

Letters to the Editor
3800 Howard Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70125

E-MAIL:

letters@timespicayune.com

FAX:

(504) 826-3812

Letters should be brief and to the point, preferably 200 words or less. To be considered for publication, they must include the writer's address and a daytime telephone number. Initials and pen names are not accepted, nor are letters addressed to others. Letters from the same writer are not published when they follow frequently upon another.

E-mailed letters should bear the subject line "letter to the editor." Do not send a letter as an e-mail attachment such as .doc or .rtf. We cannot open such files. All submit-



STAFF PHOTO

A man helps an elderly woman across St. Charles Avenue to an evacuation point Sept. 2, three days after Hurricane Katrina blew through the city.

Hear this, Mr. Potato Head

Re: "Idaho senator says fraud part of La. culture," Page A-18, Oct. 18.

I am a longtime resident of Louisiana, and I am beyond disgusted at the sentiments of Idaho Sen. Larry Craig about a culture that he is clearly incapable of even beginning to comprehend.

He is the worst sort of "ugly American," a term usually reserved for those too ethnocentric and ignorant to appreciate the unique beauty of foreign cultures.

But, yes, perhaps we should bulldoze New Orleans and turn our attention to a culturally rich state such as, say, Idaho.

What would this world be without the poetry and prose of Idaho writers, poets and playwrights? (Surely there must be one.)

And, oh, the myriad of cookbooks celebrating the cuisine of Idaho. And let us not forget the art and architecture unique to ... Boise?

Of course, the music, there's always the music: the gut-wrenching, soul-searing music that is Idaho.

In sum, perhaps we should bulldoze Idaho, because no one would even miss it.

Debbie Marx
Covington

We've got a friend in Boise

I am back in Boise, Idaho, after spending three weeks in Louisiana with a national relief organization. It was a difficult but worthwhile assignment, providing assistance to gracious and thankful people.

Idaho Sen. Larry Craig was quoted as saying, "A rookie cop in New Orleans, they pay him or her \$17,000 starting pay and then wink and say you better make the rest of it on the street."

While in New Orleans helping hurricane victims, I was protected by members of the local police force and the Louisiana National Guard.

Our senator's comments insult police officers who worked side by side with aid workers in spite of their own losses of homes, family and community.

Our senior Idaho senator is out of step with tens of thousands of Idahoans who made over \$1 million in donations to assist those in need in Louisiana. Sen. Craig should stop throwing stones in a glass house; many government entities in our country do not pass the "smell test" these days.

The Republican senator's motives smell of nasty partisan politics.

Seana Young
Boise, Idaho

Open trucks create a hazard

Taken a ride along Highway 90 west or Interstate 310 south lately? The amount of trash on and along the highways rivals that on St. Charles Avenue after a Mardi Gras parade. Hundreds of trucks and trailers hauling storm debris are on the roads loaded to the top with all kinds of trash.

Too much of it is ending up on the roadways. Lumber with nails in it, sheet metal and household items including mat-

trying to avoid debris.

I can understand the desire to get things cleaned up quickly, but why are all these big trucks and pickups with cobbled-up trailers allowed to create this unsightly and unsafe driving environment? Why doesn't the State Police require trash haulers to cover their loads? Are people going to have to be killed before something is done?

I'd also start adding a fee to every load that goes to a dump in order to clean up the mess.

No more

Hurricane Wilma was for the books no matter how many times tied the number of a single season — 21 — of hurricanes — 12.

But Wilma wasn't cool. The storm has claimed the records, roaring to California faster than any storm in history, setting the record as the fastest ever recorded in the Atlantic. The pressure that measured Wednesday morning.

Hurricane Wilma is Louisiana, and that's a new record. You can look at this storm as a relief. Wilma is going to be a storm, even if it weakens one that will cause destruction. At this point,

Want friends

There are a lot of Louisiana friends who could use your help. Sen. Larry Craig's ignominious spirited attack on this state is our mamas taught us no words of language.

They also taught us how to survive when they are down or when they aren't sure are true. I have received similar home-traffic have forgotten it.

"Fraud is in the culture. I believe that is true in the state as well," the senator told the (Idaho) Morning Tribune.

That's beyond offense. Our culture is rich and diverse. We have pride for the entire country, jazz, Mardi Gras and football. We have a level of artistry — some people raised on a diet of it to be able to appreciate.

Sen. Craig said Louisiana has the most scandals in our country. Certainly Louisiana has scandals, but so have other places. Our culture is no