



The Council
City of New Orleans

ARNIE FIELKOW
COUNCILMEMBER AT LARGE

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(504) 658-1060
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April 16, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I am dismayed and disturbed over LSU's recent decision – without explanation - to terminate Dr. Ivor van Heerden and also the decision to downsize the LSU Hurricane Center.

Under the leadership of Dr. van Heerden, the LSU Hurricane Center has saved lives in New Orleans and St. Bernard Parish.

Because of LSU's actions, citizens in Louisiana and nationwide are now without an independent expert voice on hurricane and flood protection issues. If our experts cannot speak honestly without fearing retaliation, lifesaving decisions will not be based on good information.

To date, LSU has not offered an explanation for firing Dr. van Heerden.

I ask LSU, was there something wrong with Dr. van Heerden's science? If so what?

And if there is nothing wrong with Dr. van Heerden's science or performance, then why was he fired?

Independent voices are critical to ensuring the free-flow of ideas and information. It is a sad day when contrary views are silenced.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnie D. Fielkow".

Arnie D. Fielkow
Vice President

ADF/ks

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