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Mayor

C. Ray Nagin

NAME: C. Ray Nagin, Incumbent

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PARTY AFFILIATION: (D)

PROFESSION: Business Executive

PRESENT EMPLOYER/POSITION (if self-employed, what type of business): Mayor of the city of New Orleans

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION (include graduation date): B.S. in Accounting from Tuskegee University, 1978, MBA from Tulane University, 1994.

APPLICABLE TRAINING: Vice President/General Manager of Southeast Louisiana Cox Cable, Division Controller/Auditor Associates Financial Corporation.

CIVIC EXPERIENCE: Board member United Way, Board member Covenant House, Volunteer Teacher, Mentor in Schools.

POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Mayor of New Orleans 2002- present

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS: N/A

1. What are your priorities for the city and what practical measures will you implement to meet those priorities in view of our limited resources?

My top priorities for the city are housing, levee safety, jobs and restoring the cultural dynamic. For housing, we need safe levees, clear flood maps, insurance money to start flowing and grant assistance funds to get into the hands of our residents so that they can make their decisions. Working with Congress, HUD, the state and regional parish presidents, I have developed a plan, the Failed Levees Homeowner Recovery Program, which harmonizes the federal, state and local processes for residents to repair their homes or secure an alternate location if they so desire. We have \$11 billion, approved by President Bush, we are awaiting passage from Congress, to

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implement our housing plan so that people can come home or secure housing wherever they choose. This is my top priority.

Levee safety is another top priority. I have made repeated trips to Washington, D.C., seeking true and adequate levee protection. Working with the Army Corps of Engineers, we are in the process of restoring the levees to a Category 3 standard, and have a commitment from the federal government to research Category 5 protection.

We also need jobs. I have sought economic incentives for redevelopment of business in the City. I support expanding the Renewal Community to encourage business growth. I have also urged FEMA and all contractors in the area to hire New Orleans residents. This has been a major focus of mine + let New Orleanians rebuild New Orleans. Housing and jobs are critical to repopulating the City and my plan addresses both.

Additionally, I have supported the GO Zone legislation that gives a significant amount of tax incentives for businesses to open their companies here.

I am also focused on restoring our cultural dynamic. Our tourism industry is built around our rich and vibrant culture of food, music, art, and festivals. My Administration has worked to ensure that we foster the recovery of our culture and our tourism industry. We recently had a very successful Mardi Gras, which provided both economic relief to the city and psychological relief for our citizens. I am going to continue to utilize available resources to help our tourism industry, and all those who depend on it, recover.

The priorities of my administration are the priorities of the people. We must rebuild this city together, it's the only way we can be successful.

2. Do you believe a Master Plan with the force of law is essential for New Orleans?

I believe that the City needs a plan that is inclusive so that we can have an organized, efficient and rapid recovery. I formed the Bring New Orleans Back Commission to assist me in developing a master plan to rebuild the City culturally, socially, economically, and uniquely for every citizen in the wake of the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. The BNOB reports were formulated by experts in seven strategic areas, in conjunction with community and neighborhood groups, clergy, and citizens. I believe that at the end of the day everyone wants to move forward and see progress in this city. I will continue to work with the community, city council, federal and state government to make sure that this happens.

3. How will you ensure the citizens of New Orleans, displaced or not, will have a voice in the use of federal funds for the restoration of the city?

I am committed to ensuring that every citizen has an opportunity to shape the redevelopment of our City. That is why I have held town hall meetings and formed focus groups with the Bring New Orleans Back Commission to give citizens every opportunity to be heard. I have traveled across this state to Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Shreveport, Alexandria, as well as to cities in other states, including Houston, Dallas, and Atlanta to make sure that our displaced citizens are well informed.

It is vital that our citizens have accurate information, funds and options in housing. I created the Failed Levees Homeowner Recovery Program to give citizens the power to decide whether to use federal grant dollars to repair or rebuild their homes, to sell their property, or to use the money to relocate to an alternate location in New Orleans. This is not for the government to decide; this decision should remain with the citizen, and my plan ensures that it does.

4. For those properties that are still derelict after three years, what steps are you going to take?

The main reason we are seeing some delay in restoring homes now is that people are waiting to see what the federal government is going to do. Unanswered questions about levee repairs, flood maps, green space, and grant funds for housing are hindering our recovery. We need the federal government to stop talking about helping us and make the necessary decisions and steps to resolve these issues so that our people can move forward. I have lobbied diligently for federal assistance in all of these areas, have established effective working relationships with key individuals in each branch of government and have secured commitments for this City. I will continue to identify and secure resources and commitments that make it possible for our citizens to return.

If we are successful in giving people the resources they need to take appropriate measures to restore or demolish their property, then there will not be a large number of derelict properties in three years. For those derelict or blighted properties that remain, I will continue to utilize existing laws and resources to acquire those properties and return them to commerce. Neighborhood 1, the City's housing office, in conjunction with the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, has made extraordinary progress in identifying blighted properties and providing for their restoration. We have streamlined the process of acquiring blighted and adjudicated property: the properties are listed on the City's website at www.cityofno.com under Blight Busters; this service is accessible to anyone who is interested in purchasing these

properties. We drafted legislation, which is now law that makes it easier and faster for persons to purchase blighted properties. We will continue to use this successful program to eliminate blighted and adjudicated properties to help our neighborhoods remain safe and attractive.

Comments, suggestions, questions? Contact our [webmaster](#). Last revised: May 26, 2006 07:52 PDT.

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