

PRESS RELEASE

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Representative Jim Tucker Disappointed in Ethics Board Delay

On Thursday, July 12, 2007, the Louisiana Ethics Board deferred action on the recommendations of their own staff attorneys to dismiss an anonymous complaint against Rep. Jim Tucker. Instead, the Board opted to postpone the matter until the September meeting.

At issue is whether the process which the Louisiana Housing Finance Agency follows is competitive. The Ethics Code requires that these contracts be awarded by competitive bidding, through competitively negotiated requests for proposals, or "any similar competitive selection process." Rep. Tucker fully complied with these requirements, but later declined the tax credits upon settling with his insurer.

"These bids were made to the Blanco-appointed Louisiana Housing Finance Agency and through a very competitive process," said Rep. Tucker who has been a frequent critic of the administration's spending practices. "Any suggestion that I received non-competitive or preferential treatment from the Blanco Administration is absurd."

"This unnecessary delay is an obvious attempt by some members of the Blanco-appointed Ethics Board to retaliate against me for my constant opposition to the Administration's outrageous spending increases, which have nearly doubled the state's budget in only four years." said Rep. Tucker. Louisiana's operating budget has gone from \$16 billion to \$29.8 billion, nearly a 100% increase during the Blanco Administration. Tucker has been very outspoken on the Administration's use of surplus monies for recurring expenditures.

"Acceptance of anonymous complaints such as this is a shortcoming in the ethics laws, in my opinion." said Tucker. "As is the case in my situation, anonymous complaints facilitate political vendettas, carried out under the pretense of ethics and good government."

"The facts are clear," said Tucker. "The complaint is completely baseless."

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