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MARJORIE R. ESMAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 22, 2009

Mayor C. Ray Nagin  
1300 Perdido Street  
New Orleans, LA 70112

OPEN LETTER IN SUPPORT OF DOMESTIC PARTNER REGISTRY AND BENEFITS

Dear Mr. Nagin:

The ACLU of Louisiana is delighted that once again a court has recognized that the City of New Orleans has the right to support all of its employees with benefits, to ensure the health and welfare of the families of those who devote themselves to the City's business. After all these years in which the City has shown its leadership in the interest of all of its employees, it is both unfortunate and misguided that others continue to seek to undermine the clear health, safety, and equality of everyone on the City's staff. We hope that the Alliance Defense Fund will accept the ruling of the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeal, acknowledging that the City is within its rights to promote equality for its lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered employees and their families.

Mike Johnson, Senior Legal Counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund, was appointed by Governor Jindal to the Commission on Marriage and the Family. Gov. Jindal has indicated his opposition to the issuance of a birth certificate for a child legally adopted by two men. It is clear that the Governor and his Commission on Marriage and the Family do not support equal rights for all or the protection of all of Louisiana's families and children. This climate makes it even more important for the City of New Orleans to remain committed to the protections that it has provided for so long.

In the event of further appeal, or other attacks on the City's domestic partner registry, the ACLU of Louisiana stands ready to assist. Please let us know if there is anything we can do in support of New Orleans' laudable policy supporting equal rights for everyone.

Sincerely,

Marjorie R. Esman  
Executive Director

cc: Penya Moses-Field, City Attorney