

## ETHICS AND GOOD GOVERNMENT REFORM 2014

**Civil Service Reform** – In 2013, CFI began meetings with the City’s Service and Innovation Manager on the city’s Civil Service and HR Transformation Initiative, with its goals to transform Civil Service into an efficient and highly effective office. In April 2014, CFI joined with community leaders, representing civic, business, universities and other organizations at a Press Conference with the Mayor in support of the City’s Great Place To Work Initiative, aimed at enhancing hiring, careers, pay, processes, and training for civil service employees. CFI testified in support of the civil service reforms at hearings before the Civil Service Commission and showed its support in local media presentations.

**Inspector General** - CF1 supported Inspector General Ed Quatrevaux for another term. CF1 advocated for continued funding for the State IG’s office; this passed the legislature, and participated as panelist at the national IG’s Conference in New Orleans. CFI also attended meetings on issues related to the Independent Police Monitor.

**Sewerage and Water Board** - CFI supported the charter change for the S&WB by helping to educate the public about the referendum and to inform the public about the need for qualified candidates when the new governance law (SB 47) takes effect in January 2014.

**Court Consolidation** – CFI along with other civic organizations and individual advocates with common interest in court consolidation became a part of The New Orleans Court Consolidation Working group focused on Traffic, Municipal and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> City Courts. The working group examined the evidence presented in the multiple reports by the Office of the Inspector General, The Public Financial Management, Inc. (PFM), and The Bureau of Governmental Research on the structure of the court system in New Orleans, which documented the inefficiencies with the local court system. Orleans Parish is the only parish in the state with so many separate municipal-level courts, support for which is legislatively mandated. New Orleans has the only court in the state devoted exclusively to traffic cases. New Orleans City government and the citizens are faced with significant new burdens on the City’s revenue base and severe reductions in City services and/or tax increases. The OIG report recommended merging of the Municipal and Traffic Courts, estimated to save the city of New Orleans \$2.5 million. The working group took the position that legislative action was needed to provide structural improvements and operational efficiencies with a focus on Traffic and Municipal Courts and that merging Traffic Court into Municipal Court would allow for the elimination of redundant administrative and clerical services.

**Outcomes:** Citizens for 1 supported HB 1206 by Representative Walt Leger, which passed and established that the Courts would be consolidated in 2017, and established a taskforce to study and provide for recommendations related to the reduction in judges through attrition and to establish the methods and procedures to effectuate the consolidation of the New Orleans Traffic Court and the New Orleans Municipal Court. The task force will work in conjunction with the Judicial Council of the Supreme Court and the National Center for State Courts. The task force will submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the speaker of the House and the president of the Senate, no later than thirty days prior to the start of the 2015 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

The working group will monitor the workings of the Task Force and offer its input to the proceedings, as well as develop a strategy to educate the public on its progress and on court reform issues in general.