

G R E A T E R
NEW ORLEANS



**FAIR
HOUSING
ACTION CENTER**

*Celebrating 10 years
of fighting housing
discrimination*

NEWS RELEASE

GREATER NEW ORLEANS FAIR HOUSING ACTION CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 10, 2005
www.gnofairhousing.org

CONTACT: James Perry
jperry@gnofairhousing.org
Office: 877-445-2100

FAIR HOUSING CENTER OPPOSES HB 88, URGES AMENDMENT; BILL MIGHT ERASE RENTAL HOUSING FOR EVACUEES

The Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC), opposes House Bill 88, and urges the bill be amended. The Bill has the potential to give landlords carte blanche to evict tenants and destroy or keep their belongings without due process. Tenants who have already been displaced from their homes and communities will also lose rights to their remaining personal property if the law is passed.

HB-88 proposes to allow landlords to assume that tenants have abandoned their property if rent is not current and landlords have not communicated with tenants; presume that tenants have abandoned all belongings inside their homes; allow landlords to dispose of or keep all tenants' property; and allow landlords to terminate leases by simply placing notices on tenants' doors. If the bill were passed, some tenants would have no recourse or opportunity to claim personal belongings.

By giving landlords near complete discretion to discard or remove tenants' personal property, the bill would prevent and discourage evacuees from returning to New Orleans.

James Perry, GNOFHAC Executive Director comments, "While it is essential to provide fair and equitable means to deal with landlord tenant issues in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the proposals in HB-88 dispose of nearly all the rights afforded to renters. This is particularly unsettling when one considers that approximately 60% of residents in Orleans Parish rent their homes. HB-88 has the potential to be the death-blow making thousands of evacuated renters homeless upon their return to New Orleans."

Perry and New Orleans renters who could potentially lose their home and property are available for interviews.

###

The Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC) is a private non-profit organization. The Center was established by a group of concerned New Orleanians in 1995 with the help of the National Fair Housing Alliance and a grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. GNOFHAC is dedicated to eliminating housing discrimination and furthering equal housing opportunities through education, outreach, advocacy, and

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

George Amedee, *Board
President*

Jayne Argentine
Cynthia Honore Collins
Ramona Fernandez
Lucinda Flowers
Anthony Keck
Calvin Kelly
Shelia Matute
John Penny

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

James Perry