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Contact:

Krystal Hendon

krystal.hendon@gmail.com

Sewerage And Water Board Reform Measure Passes Legislature

BATON ROUGE – This morning, Senator J.P. Morrell announced the passage of a sweeping reform of the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board, enacting key measures for accountability, transparency, responsiveness and professionalism for New Orleans water system manager.

“I’m proud to have worked closely with my colleagues and the city to produce tough reforms for one of the city’s most vital institutions,” said Senator Morrell. “These good government modifications modernize agency governance, vastly increasing public accountability and transparency while enabling the board to act more effectively and efficiently. I believe this measure will increase public confidence in the agency and make it more responsive to the needs of all New Orleanians.”

Senator Morrell’s bill, SB 47, co-authored by State Rep. Walt Leger, reduces the size of the board for more manageable quorums, shortens and staggers member term limits, creates a diverse committee charged with nominating well-qualified members for Mayoral selection, mandates inclusive geographic representation from throughout the city, and promotes an accountable and transparent contracting process. Morrell’s bill also mandates city residency for board members and council confirmation of agency appointments and ensures consumer representation on the board.

After deliberations in the House and Senate, a joint conference committee led by Senator Morrell amalgamated House and Senate changes to produce a strong, consensus instrument. The bill now heads to the Governor’s desk for signature.

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