



# NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Sheila McCant  
LA House of Representatives  
Office of Public Information  
Phone: (225) 342-9795  
Fax: (225) 219-4380

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## GREGORY ERNST TO TEMPORARILY REPLACE LORUSSO

House Speaker Jim Tucker today accepted the recommendation of the House & Governmental Affairs Committee and appointed Gregory Ernst to temporarily replace state Rep. Nick Lorusso who has been ordered to active duty by the U.S. Army.

Tucker said, "I have accepted the recommendation of the House & Governmental Affairs Committee and am appointing Gregory Ernst as Rep. Lorusso's temporary replacement. This was a win-win situation in that all three nominees were extremely qualified and I want to thank them all for their willingness to serve."

"It is important that the citizens of District 94 continue to have representation while Rep. Lorusso takes his public service a step farther and serves his country in the war on terrorism. I look forward to working with Mr. Ernst and believe he will serve his district well during Rep. Lorusso's absence."

"I also would like to commend Rep. Lorusso for his service to his country and wish him the best of luck during his active duty."

Ernst, a graduate of Harvard College and Tulane Law School, is a partner in the law firm of Peuler & Ernst, specializing in Admiralty and Maritime Law. He previously served as a staff attorney with the National Law Center on Homelessness and the Louisiana Mental Health Advocacy Service. He also served as a Summer Fellow for the Louisiana Department of Justice in the Environmental Enforcement section. He is a member of the Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel.

**(more)**

## **add one - Ernst**

In accordance with Constitutional Amendment No. 3 (Act 931 of the 2008 Regular Session) which was approved by voters last November, a legislator ordered to active duty in the armed forces for a period of 180 days or more is to submit the names of at least three nominees to be his temporary successor to the presiding officer of the house of the legislature of which he is a member.

The nominees must meet the qualifications and eligibility requirements of legislators, i.e. be at least 18 years of age, a registered voter, a Louisiana resident for at least two years, and a resident of the legislative district he will represent for at least one year prior to running for office. Immediate family members of legislators cannot be nominated or chosen to serve in this capacity.

All three nominees signed affidavits with the Clerk of the House prior to the House & Governmental Affairs Committee meeting stating they met the constitutional requirements.

Lorusso submitted the names of Gregory L. Ernst, Thomas G. Fierke, and Steven L. Pettus as nominees. Mr. Ernst and Mr. Pettus were interviewed by the House & Governmental Affairs Committee today. Mr. Fierke was unable to attend due to a conflict and Mr. Lorusso presented his biographical information.

The committee unanimously recommended Mr. Ernst as Lorusso's temporary replacement.

Lorusso, a Lieutenant Colonel in the JAG Corps Reserves, will serve as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate for the Army's I Corps at Fort Lewis in the state of Washington in support of the Global War on Terrorism. He reports to active duty February 9, 2009.

Ernst has seven days after Lorusso begins active duty to take the oath of office.

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**PHOTO CUT LINE:** State Rep. Nick Lorusso (left) congratulates Gregory Ernst after the House & Governmental Affairs Committee recommended he temporarily replace Lorusso as the District 94 representative during Lorusso's tour of active duty in the Army Reserves.