



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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DATE: October 15, 2008

STATE REPRESENTATIVE CALLED TO MILITARY DUTY

Louisiana State Representative Nick Lorusso (R-New Orleans), a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves, has been called to active duty for one year starting early next spring. He will be assigned as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate for the Army's I Corps at Fort Lewis, Washington in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

News of his mobilization comes just weeks before a state constitutional amendment addressing this very issue, which Rep. Lorusso proposed, will appear on the November 4 ballot. "We are a nation at war and mobilization of the Reserve forces is always a possibility," Lorusso said. "Preparing for this possibility was one of the reasons I proposed this legislation."

Under current law, if a legislator is called to active military duty, there are no provisions for a temporary replacement or a proxy vote. For example, when Major General Hunt Downer, then a state representative, was called to active duty for the Persian Gulf War in the early 1990's, he was unable to vote on any bills during the legislative session. However, if the constitutional amendment passes, it will allow the Speaker of the House of Representatives or

the President of the Senate to appoint a temporary replacement to serve in place of the legislator called to active duty.

When he first ran for the Legislature in March 2007, Lorusso touted his service in the Army Reserves, as well as the fact he had been called to active duty twice before. With his Reserve status before the voters, Lorusso was elected in a special election, then re-elected eight months later in the regular election.

If the amendment passes, Lorusso would have to follow the strict guidelines of the implementing legislation and nominate at least three possible temporary replacements to the House and Governmental Affairs Committee. After public hearings by the committee, Speaker of the House Jim Tucker (R-Terrytown) will appoint one of the nominees to serve in Lorusso's place for the time he is on active duty.

Lorusso's law prohibits the nomination of an immediate family member. Furthermore, in order to prevent an unfair advantage, if the temporary replacement is serving during the qualification period of the next election cycle, he or she is prohibited from running for the office. Finally, in order to prevent additional cost to the State, the law strips the legislative salary from the Legislator called to active duty and gives it to the temporary replacement.

"I am proud to have served in the Army for the last fifteen years," Lorusso said. "I'm also proud to represent District 94 and look forward to continue serving our district upon completion of my tour of active duty."