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Personal and Confidential

Mr. James Gill
3800 Howard Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70125

Dear James,

I am responding to your column from last month regarding my letter to Jefferson Parish homeowners. In your column you said I lied. You are mistaken.

Here are the facts. The Jefferson Levee District did impose a higher tax rate for 2004 than it did for 2003. By law the rate for 2004 was 2.75 mills. This new rate was the result of a mandatory roll back of the district's millage rate of 3.13 mills levied in 2003. By law the roll back rate is the new rate for the district.

No district is mandated to roll forward its rate above the roll back rate. The levee district, however, elected to roll forward its rate to 4.01 mills, its maximum authorized rate. The district did this act voluntarily. By law this voluntary act is a tax increase; and the rate of 4.01 mills levied by the district in 2004 is more than the rate of 3.13 mills levied in 2003, not the same rate as you incorrectly claimed.

If you had taken the time to read the law or if you had taken the time to speak to someone who knows the law regarding millage adjustments or if you had independently confirmed the tax rates levied by the district in 2003 and 2004, you would have known these facts.

Your obvious bitterness and blatant sarcasm are a staple of all of your columns. Your jaded outlook on life and your outright disregard for truth and fairness have marred your ability to communicate effectively with the readers of your column. You have fallen so far.

I know better than to expect an apology.

Sincerely,

Lawrence E. Chehardy, CLA
Assessor
Jefferson Parish