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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Honorable Mayor-President and Members
of the Metropolitan Council
City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, the fiduciary fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge, Louisiana (City-Parish) as of and for the year ended December 31, 2003, which collectively comprise the City-Parish's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents. We have also audited the financial statements of each of the City-Parish's non-major governmental, non-major enterprise, and internal service funds presented as supplemental information in the accompanying combining and individual fund financial statements as of and for the year ended December 31, 2003, as listed in the table of contents. These financial statements are the responsibility of the City-Parish's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements and schedules based on our audit. We did not audit the financial statements of certain component units discretely presented as described in note 1a to the financial statements which represent 68% and 64%, respectively, of the assets and revenues of the aggregate discretely presented component units. Those financial statements were audited by other auditors, whose reports thereon were furnished to us, and our opinion, herein, insofar as it relates to the amounts included for these entities, is based upon the reports of the other auditors.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit and the reports of other auditors provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, based upon our audit and the reports of other auditors, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, the fiduciary fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City of Baton Rouge-Parish of East Baton Rouge as of December 31, 2003, and the respective changes in financial position and cash flows, where applicable, thereof for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Also, in our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of each nonmajor governmental, nonmajor enterprise, and internal service fund of the City-Parish as of December 31, 2003, and the respective changes in financial position and cash flows, where applicable, thereof for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated May 25, 2004, on our consideration of internal control over financial reporting of the City-Parish and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be read in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

Management's Discussion and Analysis beginning on page 3, and the Trend Data on Pension Funding listed as Required Supplemental Information in the Table of Contents as Exhibits B-1 through B-3, are not a required part of the basic financial statements but are supplementary information required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. We have applied certain limited procedures, which consisted principally of inquiries of management regarding the methods of measurement and presentation of the required supplementary information. However, we did not audit the information and express no opinion on it.

The accompanying financial information as listed in the Table of Contents as Supplementary Schedules, Exhibits I-1 and I-2, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements of the City-Parish. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and the combining and individual fund financial statements, and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

The accompanying financial information in the Statistical Section is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements of the City-Parish. The information has not been audited by us, and accordingly, we express no opinion on this information.



Baton Rouge, Louisiana
May 25, 2004