

Let's get to the point. Closing the Domingue, Heymann, James and Bowles recreational centers in north Lafayette's community is not only problematic, but it is reckless.

The impact of these closures will be felt economically, educationally, and physically in a community that is working hard to reinvest in itself after having already experienced historical and recent practices of unfair, systematic disenfranchisement.

**Economical** : While even ONE job loss is one too many, if closed, 37 employees, along with park police, would lose their jobs. This job loss would greatly minimize the beautification, maintenance, and safety services needed in the community, as well as drastically affect the livelihood of employees and their families.

**Educational** : In a time where there is fluidity in our local school system due to a nation-wide pandemic, the hundreds of youth who utilize the tutoring programs at these centers would be even more at risk without educational assistance. Having been raised and as a resident in the north Lafayette community, I know firsthand the importance of tutoring programs in helping to shrink educational gaps.

**Physical** : COVID-19 has brought to the forefront the deafening impacts to a race of people that experience egregious health disparities. With African Americans accounting for approximately 23% of the nation's Covid-19 related deaths, why close recreational centers where so many utilize the weight rooms or exercise classes to maintain their health and physical fitness?

While the Mayor-President desires to reduce the budget, these four recreational centers are more than just a line item on a budget spreadsheet. They represent the memories of a community's past, the passion of its present, and the resiliency of the next generation's future. More than anything they are a representation of the people.

The people.

Therein lies the challenge. Somehow along history's lines of conservative versus liberal, budget cuts, disenfranchisement, and public private partnerships, some of my fellow elected officials have forgotten that we are not in the business of political allegiance. As public servants, as elected officials, we are in the business of people. And when you are in the business of people, the people come first.

As a public servant to the north Lafayette community for eight years, I'm calling on all my fellow public servants, past and present, liberal and conservative, to join me in

opposing the closure of the Domingue, Heymann, James and Bowles recreational centers, and any associated job losses. Let us stand as one as we work to put Lafayette first by putting its people first.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vincent Pierre". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vincent" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Pierre".

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