

## OUR OPINIONS

# Rebuilding Crimestoppers

Jefferson Parish's decision to donate \$100,000 to the local Crimestoppers organization is a good use of money the parish set aside for crime-fighting programs.

The Crimestoppers name is well established, and residents know that if they have information about a crime or the whereabouts of a criminal suspect, they can call 822-1111 to pass along an anonymous tip to local law enforcement officials. If the information leads to an arrest and indictment, the caller could receive a monetary award.

Jefferson Parish is dealing with a spike in violent crime, mainly on the West Bank. Councilman Chris Roberts said last week that it makes no sense for the parish

to re-invent the wheel by establishing its own system for receiving crime tips. "I can tell you that they are going to be much better at taking tips than we are ...," he said.

Good point. Darlene Cusanza, the executive director of the organization, said Crimestoppers will use Jefferson Parish's donation to re-establish a call center that was destroyed during Hurricane Katrina. Since the storm, the organization has been making do with an off-site answering service.

The parish donation will help Crimestoppers reassert itself and, one hopes, help put criminals away.