

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



July 12, 2012

Dear Fellow Residents of Miami-Dade County,

The promises I made to this community were fulfilled for fiscal year FY 2011-12, and the proposed budget for FY 2012-13 continues to deliver on those promises. This is a responsible budget that reduces the tax rate, further cuts property tax revenues, maintains the same levels of service, and avoids further employee layoffs.

A key promise was to reduce the burden on our taxpayers. Days after taking office, I proposed the FY 2011-12 Budget that took the total property tax rate back to FY 2009-10 levels. **This was the largest tax cut in County history.** We developed a budget that would sustain operations for two years without increasing the tax rates and without additional concessions from our employees beyond those included in last year’s plan. The FY 2012-13 Proposed Budget further reduces the tax rates by a combined two percent, to offset the growth in property values. This Proposed Budget includes \$4.3 million less in property tax revenue than the FY 2011-12 Adopted Budget, and saves taxpayers more than \$405 million over two years.

Another key promise was to reorganize County government in order to make it more efficient, reduce costs and improve the delivery of services to our community. I led that reorganization effort during FY 2011-12, which reduced the number of County departments from 42 to 25 and eliminated a total of 1,767 positions. Efficiencies brought about because of the reorganization – elimination of overhead and consolidation of services, for example – will save nearly \$80 million over two years; more than \$43 million just in this Proposed Budget.

Last year, by a 7 to 6 vote, the Board imposed an additional 4 percent contribution by employees to group health. Because we are currently at impasse regarding this issue, the FY 2012-13 Proposed Budget provides an Impasse Reserve to provide funding for the elimination of the additional 4 percent group health contribution, should the Board choose to do so. However, should the Board opt to re-impose the 4 percent group health contribution, the funding in the reserve could be used to further reduce the tax rate or otherwise enhance service. Even without this element, the collective bargaining agreements negotiated last year will continue to save \$158 million annually.

I also promised a more transparent budget development process. This year we held 35 public meetings to give our Commissioners and their staff members, as well as the public, the opportunity to review each department’s budget submission. As you will see, this document communicates the details of our budget in a new way because I am committed to an easy-to-understand plan for the delivery of services from your government to you.



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Another important promise I made was to plan for the future. During my time as an elected official, I have consistently supported projects and activities that promote job-creation, economic development and the sustainability of our community. However, I do not support funding these projects and activities by mortgaging our children's and grandchildren's futures. My FY 2012-13 Proposed Budget sustains our organization by minimizing our reliance on one-time revenues, improves efficiency of operations, and supports process changes, infrastructure improvements, and projects that will attract and retain businesses to promote the future success of Miami-Dade County.

Last year, I said that the FY 2011-12 Budget was just the beginning. We have made tremendous progress in meeting my promises to you, our residents. But we have much more to do. As I lead the County in these efforts, I remain committed to my vision of restoring economic prosperity to our community and making it a great place for our families to build brighter futures. I look forward to working together with our County Commission to achieve this vision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carlos A. Gimenez", written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

Carlos A. Gimenez

Mayor