



December 17, 2018

To the Residents of Miami-Dade County:

Local government faces a myriad of challenges every single day. In the past two years, Miami-Dade County has faced Hurricane Irma and the spread of the Zika virus. We are providing additional security at public primary schools in the unincorporated area and staffing new Priority Response Teams countywide in response to the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas (MSD) High School. We are developing an enhanced capital plan to prepare for the effects of climate change, which are already impacting our community. All the while, we continue to provide the important services needed to keep our community sustainable and resilient, and make Miami-Dade County a place where people are happy to visit, to work and to live. The FY 2018-19 Adopted Budget reflects our efforts to address these challenges and prepare for the shocks and stresses that are ahead of us.

The most emergent issue we had to address when developing the FY 2018-19 Budget was the response to the events at MSD. Once the initial shock from the school shooting wore off, we learned there were many warning signs and many weaknesses in our systems that, if known and mitigated, could have helped avoid this tragedy. The Florida Legislature passed sweeping laws mandating new systems for identifying and disarming potential threats, hardening our public schools, and providing specially trained law enforcement officers at every public school. However, the State budget only included about \$250 million statewide to support these new requirements. That is simply not enough money to hire all of the new police officers needed for the schools in our community. There is nothing more important than the safety of our children and no excuse for not providing the resources needed to do all we can to protect our schools and our communities.

In collaboration with Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) and most municipalities in our County, we are making sure our children are protected. The Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) is providing resources to place an officer at every public primary school every single day in the Unincorporated Municipal Service Area (UMSA) since the school year started in August. We are also staffing nine Priority Response Teams (PRTs) of officers specially trained to respond to active shooter and other emergencies where large groups of people congregate. We have enhanced resources in our Threat Management Section in order to monitor social media and other communications channels to provide an advanced warning of potential risks and be able to respond when an individual is identified by the courts as being in crisis. These resources are provided initially utilizing personnel on overtime, but the Adopted Budget includes enough new officer recruit classes to fully staff the PRTs on regular time beginning next fiscal year. We are working closely with MDCPS to correct the funding inequities of these new laws and continue to provide officers until such time as MDCPS is able to meet the requirements with their own law enforcement contingent.

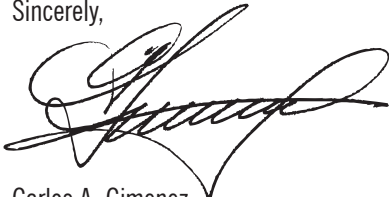
In addition to providing for enhanced school and community safety, the FY 2018-19 Budget continues our efforts to promote a resilient Miami-Dade County. As part of the Rockefeller Foundation’s 100 Resilient Cities, we are part of a global community that is both actively engaged in and seeking new and innovative ways to address the major challenges faced by our respective regions, both now and in the future. To ensure that our residents are part of our efforts, just last month we began the #MiamiDadeThrives campaign. In just two weeks, we already achieved a reach of nearly 400,000 people through social media and had our content displayed almost 2 million times. We are uniting our community with the goal of being a truly resilient city in the future.

More than \$600 million in our operating budget and \$21 billion worth of capital projects in our multi-year capital plan is committed to our resilience efforts. Funding is dedicated to infrastructure improvements in our water and sewer systems, our roads, our fire stations, and our airports and seaport. More than \$225 million is included to address the need for safe and affordable housing. Funding is included to maintain our rights-of-way, our parks and our facilities, provide programming at our parks, libraries and neighborhood centers, feed and provide care for the elderly, enhance our efforts in Animal Services, replace vehicles throughout the County, add new units of fire and rescue services, continue our child safety initiatives, and support all of the other services we provide to ensure quality of life for all Miamians, while making Miami-Dade County attractive to people who want to visit, to live and to do business here...now and in the future.

Two years ago when the Florida Legislature passed a bill calling for a 50 percent increase to the value of the homestead exemption, we began to prepare for the more than \$50 million impact successful passage of this referendum would have had on our property tax-supported budget. We started to reserve funding in order to mitigate the impacts of the revenue reduction and allow for a phase-in of service impacts and personnel reductions. We also tightened controls and reduced expenditures in anticipation of a revenue reduction. While a majority of voters in Florida voted for this amendment, the affirmative votes did not reach the threshold of 60 percent necessary for the passage of constitutional amendments. We fully funded reserves to mitigate the impact of the homestead exemption and can now use that funding to support the school safety efforts, as well as other one-time funding needs. As part of the FY 2019-20 Proposed Budget development, we will be able to consider options for the funding that will now be available.

The FY 2018-19 Adopted Budget continues my administration's focus on transparency, efficiency and fiscal responsibility. My highest priority since the beginning of my term in office has been ensuring that our community is resilient. We are well-poised to reach successes never before achieved in South Florida. I am proud to be your Mayor and to lead Miami-Dade County as we continue to flourish into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlos A. Gimenez', written in a cursive style.

Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor, Miami-Dade County