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Memorandum

From: Jane Sargent
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To: Chairman Joe A. Martinez
Board of County Commissioners

CC: Joe Rasco

Date: April 19, 2011

Subject: March 2011 Monthly Report

In March, Miami Dade County retained Akerman to assist with its Federal Legislative Agenda and notified us of our issue assignments for the year. We had an opportunity to met with Joe Rasco, Bill Couch and the County's other federal lobbyists to discuss our assignments and the County's agenda on April 13, but our efforts on a number of issues began in March. We have provided an update on those issues below:

Miami Harbor Dredging Project:

In March, Akerman assisted with the County's efforts to secure federal funding for the Miami Harbor Channel Dredging project. On March 8, Jose Villalobos accompanied Bill Johnson, Port of Miami Director, and Joe Rasco to Washington, DC. They met with Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz to discuss the port and its efforts to secure federal funding for the project through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

They also met with Senator Bill Nelson and his Chief of Staff, Pete Mitchell, to discuss the project. The Senator reiterated his support for the project and his commitment to assist the County with obtaining federal funding for the project. He assured them during the meeting that he was working closely with President Obama, the White House and U.S. Corps of Engineers on the issue.

It is our understanding that there was a subsequent meeting in Miami with Senator Nelson,

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President Obama and Bill Johnson that has led to positive developments in the project moving forward. We understand that this is a top priority for the County and we will continue to be available to assist the County on this issue as needed.

International Trade Issues

Our issue assignments include international trade issues as well. While we will be working with the Office of Economic Development & International Trade (OEDIT) on identifying funding opportunities to promote increased trade, we will also be reporting on Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and other legislation and federal agencies actions that may impact the County. For instance, there have been renewed interest in Washington, DC to move long-stalled Panama Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

In March, Jose Villalobos met with Miguel Otero, District Director for Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, to discuss Akerman's issue assignments for the County including international trade matters. Jose also met with Congressman Diaz-Balart and provided him with an update on his recent trip to Panama and his meetings with the U.S. Ambassador to Panama and others while he was there.

In March, Congressman Diaz-Balart also traveled to Panama as part of part of a Congressional delegation trip to Central and South America. The delegation traveled to Columbia, Panama, Guatemala, and Mexico to discuss U.S. security assistance and strengthening economic ties with those countries.

We understand that the OEDIT is planning to lead a business development mission to Panama in June 2011. Panama has become one of South Florida's fastest growing trading partners, currently ranking in the top twenty trading partners for Miami.

The trade agreement with Panama was negotiated by the Bush Administration and agreed to in late 2006. However, Congressional approval of the trade deal stalled for a number of reasons, including Democrats' concerns over Panama's banking secrecy laws. In early April, Panama ratified the U.S.-Panama Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) – a separate tax agreement which should address the concerns of Democrats in Congress.

On April 18, the Obama Administration announced that they will immediately start seeking Congressional approval of the Panama FTA and are prepared to work with Congress to draft the implementing legislation and get the trade agreement approved as soon as possible. The President is meeting with Panamanian President Ricardo Martinelli in Washington on April 28 to discuss the trade agreement and other matters. Given OEDIT's upcoming trade mission to Panama, we will continue to provide regular updates to the County on the renewed push to approve the trade deal with Panama.

In addition to the trade agreement with Panama, the Administration is also expected to begin the Congressional approval process for the stalled Columbia and South Korea trade agreements. Both agreements were negotiated by the Bush Administration and have been held up by other issues. The President reached a new deal with South Korea last year on auto

tariffs and worked out an arrangement with Columbia earlier this month on labor standards, which should allow the pending trade agreements to move forward.

Jackson Health System/Health Care Issues:

One of Jackson's highest priorities this year to obtain a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) designation for its primary care clinics. As an FQHC, JHS would be eligible to receive grant funding under Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act, which is a important funding opportunity that would help to sustain JHS. Other benefits of FQHC status include enhanced Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement, medical malpractice coverage through the Federal Torts Claims Act, participation in the 340B drug discount program, access to National Health Service Corps personnel, access to the Vaccine for Children program, and eligibility for various other federal grants and programs.

In November, JHS applied for a Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) Health Center "New Access Point" (NAP) Grant for the North Dade Health Center, one of JHS' primary care clinics that provides primary, specialty, and chronic care services to over 50,000 uninsured residents in North Dade. If awarded the NAP grant, the North Dade Health Center would receive an FQHC designation and be eligible for FQHC benefits. JHS submitted its NAP grant to HRSA in November 2010. Award announcements are expected to be made on or about August 1, 2011.

In the meantime, JHS has decided to pursue a FQHC "Look-Alike" designation for the North Dade Health Center. Jackson submitted its Look-Alike application on March 29, 2011. A Look-Alike designation will provide many of the same benefits as an FQHC designation. If approved, the North Dade Health Center will benefit from enhanced reimbursement for Medicare and Medicaid, participation in the federal 340B drug discount program and other programs that require FQHC designation for participation. However, as a Look-Alike the North Dade Health Center would not receive a cash grant or malpractice coverage under the Federal Tort Claims Act as FQHCs do.

In March, we drafted a Congressional support letter for Jackson's FQHC Look-Alike application and contacted the members of the Miami Dade Congressional delegation to obtain support letters for JHS' application. We were able to secure support letters from Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen, Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, Congresswoman Frederica Wilson, Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz, Congressman Rivera, and Senator Nelson. Jackson submitted its application to HRSA on March 29. The Look-Alike application review process takes 90 days.

We will continue to work on JHS' Look-Alike application as well as its NAP grant, which is currently under review at HRSA. We are continuing to stay in contact with HRSA as well as the Miami Dade Congressional delegation. We are also helping JHS officials follow up with Members directly about their support for JHS' Look-Alike and NAP grant applications. We will continue to keep the County informed of our efforts.

Activities for April

In April, we met with Joe Rasco, Bill Couch and the County's other federal lobbyists to discuss our issue assignments and the County's agenda for this year. We will coordinate with the County and departments within our issue areas to get the necessary information and briefings on our issues.

We will provide updates to the County on any relevant developments. As we have reported separately, the Congress finally completed the FY2011 appropriations process, which was signed into law by the President on April 15, 2011. We will be reviewing the appropriations act and reporting to the County on funding levels for programs of interest to the County. Also, the Congress will begin working on the FY2012 budget process and we will reporting on any relevant developments as that process moves forward.