

WASHINGTON WEEKLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 3 – SEPTEMBER 7, 2012

Below is an informal overview of the Washington D.C. activities of the Miami-Dade County Office of Intergovernmental Affairs:

THE SENATE WAS NOT IN SESSION THIS WEEK

THE HOUSE WAS NOT IN SESSION THIS WEEK

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION IN CHARLOTTE

South Florida Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, in her role as Chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, called to order the 2012 Democratic National Convention in Charlotte earlier this week. Notable Floridians speaking at the convention included former South Florida Congressman Robert Wexler and former Florida Governor Charlie Crist.

Now the candidates turn their attention toward the upcoming, and increasingly important, presidential and vice presidential debates. The non-partisan and non-profit Commission on Presidential Debates worked with both campaigns to set up three presidential and one vice presidential debates during the 2012 general election. The debate dates, policy topic and locations are:

1. October 3, 2012

Topic: Domestic policy

University of Denver in Denver, Colorado

2. October 11, 2012

Vice Presidential

Topic: Foreign and domestic policy

Centre College in Danville, Kentucky

3. October 16, 2012

Topic: Town meeting format including foreign and domestic policy

Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York

4. October 22, 2012

Topic: Foreign policy

Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida

COUNTY'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION SENDS LETTER TO OMB DIRECTOR REQUESTING DEEP DREDGE FUNDS

This week, members of the Miami-Dade County congressional delegation sent a letter to Jeffrey Zients the Acting Director of the President's Office of Management and Budget requesting the inclusion of funding for PortMiami's deep dredge project in the President's FY 2014 budget. Below is an excerpt of the letter.

Dear Director Zients:

On July 19th, the White House announced that infrastructure improvements at five major seaports in the U.S. would be expedited as nationally and regionally significant projects, including the dredging projects at PortMiami and the Port of Jacksonville.

As the Members of Congress that represent Miami-Dade County, we request your close and careful consideration of these critical improvements, and respectfully ask that the President's FY 2014 budget request include funding for PortMiami's deep dredging project.

The opening of the Panama Canal's larger locks in 2015 and the expanded commodity flows from Southeast Asia through the Suez Canal are impacting trade patterns and offering new global trade opportunities for the U.S. America's seaports must be able to accommodate these increased cargo flows, including the large mega-ships which are anticipated on the East Coast upon completion of the Panama Canal expansion. In fact, the Ports of Miami and Jacksonville are already handling less than fully-loaded mega container vessels through weekly services that travel through the Suez Canal. These Suez services will continue to grow, and will need access to deeper East Coast ports as soon as possible. Florida's strategic position places it at the crossroads of international commerce, and Florida's ports are extremely well-positioned to accept fully loaded post-Panamax vessels.

Without additional East Coast deep draft capacity in place, the U.S. is at risk of losing jobs overseas, as vessels can call at the nearby foreign ports which already have 50-foot harbors, such as Jamaica and Freeport. Deep draft channels at the Ports of Miami and Jacksonville will lead to over 130,000 high-paying jobs.

The PortMiami deep dredge project will deepen the federal channel from its current depth of 42 feet to a depth of 50-52 feet. It is the only fully authorized deep dredge project in the Southeast U.S., and the only project that can be finished in tandem with the opening of the expanded Panama Canal. While the permitting and reviews are essentially complete, we encourage the Administration to keep the construction stage on a closely scrutinized time table and to make every effort to complete the project in advance of the opening of the expanded Panama Canal, as this timing will be critical in attracting mega-ships to Florida. We ask that any unforeseen delays or complications be handled with the utmost urgency and at the highest decision-making levels. We would like to thank the Administration for recognizing the strategic and economic significance of these projects and look forward to working with you to assure that these critical navigation improvements are carried out in an expeditious manner.

This letter was made possible by the combined efforts of the county's congressional delegation, PortMiami, OIA and the Alcalde and Fay federal lobbying team.

**FLORIDA CUSTOMS BROKERS AND FORWARDERS ASSOCIATION,
PORTMIAMI AND OIA TO MEET WITH SOUTH FLORIDA
CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

OIA, along with the Port of Miami and the Florida Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association (FCBFA) have scheduled meetings with Members of Congress from Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties and both Senate offices. PortMiami, as a member and key partner of FCBFA, will discuss key federal policy issues during their annual conference's "Lobby Day" on Tuesday, September 11. The federal legislative agenda, which compliments priorities included in PortMiami and Miami-Dade County federal legislative agenda, includes such topics as, trade, transportation infrastructure investment, national freight policy and homeland security issues that impact the cargo and shipping industry.

CONGRESSWOMAN ROS-LEHTINEN TO JOIN UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI PRESIDENT SHALALA AT FOR ANNOUNCEMENT

On Monday, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen will join University of Miami President Donna Shalala, Dean Pascal J. Goldschmidt of the University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine, and Dr. Jose Szapocznik, Chair of University of Miami's Department of Epidemiology and Public Health for a news conference at the University's Life Science & Technology Park for a major announcement. They will announce the inclusion of the University of Miami's Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) into the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) prestigious Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Consortium. University of Miami's CTSI will join 60 other medical research institutions from across the nation as they work together translating research discovery into improved patient care.

Said Ros-Lehtinen:

"This is such a tremendous achievement. The University of Miami is a wonderful and deserving addition to the NIH's prestigious Clinical and Translational Science Awards Consortium. It has a proven academic and research record, and has been dedicated to making significant contributions to the health of South Florida's diverse population. The outstanding faculty, staff and bright young students of the university are certain to further the Consortium's goal of translating emerging medical research and discoveries into effective methods of treating communities, and will certainly bring a unique approach to the Consortium through their contributions to minority health."

EVENT DETAILS

WHEN: *Monday, September 10, 2012 at 11:00 a.m.*

WHERE: *University of Miami Life Science & Technology Park - 1951 NW 7th Avenue, Miami, FL*

FIU TO HOST CAPITOL HILL BRIEFING:

“BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND PATHWAYS TO ADDRESS THE FOUNDATIONAL GRAND CHALLENGE FOR ENGINEERING EDUCATION — CONCRETE STEPS TOWARD BROADENING PARTICIPATION”

Florida International University's (FIU) DC office has invited Members and key staff to a Congressional briefing that will be hosted by Congresswoman Frederica Wilson, Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart and Congressman Silvestre Reyes. FIU's Dean of Engineering, Amir Mirmiran, along with those from Notre Dame, Cal State Los Angeles and University of Texas at El Paso will review the findings of a National Science Foundation-sponsored workshop on the future of Engineering Education held at FIU earlier this year.

DATE:

Wednesday, September 12, 2012

LOCATION:

House Budget Committee Room,
210 Cannon House Office Building

TIME:

9:30 A.M.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

Congresswoman Frederica Wilson (FL)

Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart (FL)

Congressman Silvestre Reyes (TX)

From FIU's DC office:

With the increase of minorities among high school graduates, and the national imperative for more engineers, the frontline of challenges in engineering education has shifted to the public, urban, minority-serving universities. It is vital that these universities succeed if our nation's innovation and manufacturing future is to be secured.

In a first of its kind effort earlier this year, the Deans of Minority-Serving Colleges of Engineering came together to develop a roadmap and formulate recommendations for stakeholders at all levels — school districts, community colleges, engineering schools, industry, and government.

We invite you and your colleagues to learn more at this informative briefing, including:

- *Remarks from key members of Congress*
- *Announcement of national goals on engineering education*
- *Key recommendations of the report*
- *Opportunities for congressional and other stakeholder collaboration*

MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE STUDENT ADDRESSES DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

On Thursday, Miami Dade College student Angie Flores delivered a speech to the Democratic National Convention. An excerpt of her speech is below:

"My name is Angie Flores, and I'm a student at Miami Dade College. When you grow up in a family where getting by is a struggle, college can seem like a dream for someone else; even if, like me, you love learning. Out of 3.2 million young people ages 16 to 24,

2.2 million do not go to college. More than a million don't even graduate from high school. The statistics say that I shouldn't be here, that the most someone like me should hope for is to get by, not get ahead. But I'm not a statistic. I'm a young woman with a bright future."

CLIMATE COMMUNITIES

Jim O'Reilly, the Director of Public Policy for Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships joined the Climate Communities webinar titled "Local Energy Benchmarking Ordinances" to discuss the types of energy benchmarking ordinances that cities across the country have adopted, and to describe the reaction among property owners and tenants, as well as how to identify how cities overcame barriers to adoption.

According to the webinar, "A growing number of jurisdictions have adopted laws requiring rating and disclosure of building energy performance. Recently, the Philadelphia City Council approved a new ordinance requiring energy benchmarking of large commercial buildings in the city. The point of the Philadelphia ordinance – as well as similar measures in place in New York City, Washington, Austin, San Francisco and Seattle, among others – is to provide prospective buyers and tenants with comparative information regarding building energy use to allow them to make more informed decisions, reduce emissions and save money."

LOOKING AHEAD

The week of September 10 – 14:

The House will be in session next week.

The Senate will be in session next week.

If you would like to stop receiving this report please send an email to the following address - intergov@miamidade.gov - with "REMOVE" in the subject line

WASHINGTON WEEKLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 17 – SEPTEMBER 21, 2012

Below is an informal overview of the Washington D.C. activities of the Miami-Dade County Office of Intergovernmental Affairs:

THE SENATE WAS IN SESSION THIS WEEK

THE HOUSE WAS IN SESSION THIS WEEK

ELECTION COUNTDOWN: 46 DAYS

CONGRESS ON RECESS UNTIL AFTER NOVEMBER 6 ELECTION

The House concluded legislative business today and will be out of session for at least the next seven weeks. The Senate was scheduled to hold a series of five roll-call votes prior to adjourning for the election. The votes would be on 1) passage of Sen. Rand Paul's (KY) bill to cut off aid to Pakistan, Egypt and Libya; 2) passage of a Senate resolution by Sen. Graham (S.C.) urging "diplomatic and economic pressure" to deter Iran from developing nuclear weapons capability; 3 and 4) to conclude debate and pass a bill to keep the federal government operating through March 27, 2013; and 5) to proceed to Sen. Tester's (MT) bill, "The Sportsmen's Act of 2012" which deals with a wide array of issues, including: easing hunters' access to public lands, modification of regulations impacting certain sport fishing equipment, prohibiting the sale of billfish, a study on artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico and the reauthorization of numerous conservation programs.

GOV. SCOTT SENDS LETTER TO DHS SECRETARY NAPOLITANO

OIA, the Aviation Department, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Gov. Scott's Washington D.C. office and the county's congressional delegation have been working together in recent months to impress upon the Department of Homeland Security, (DHS) the need for increased Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) staff at Miami International Airport. This need is spurred, in part, from a January 19, 2012 Executive Order signed by President Obama which directed his Administration to develop a national strategy to make the U.S. the world's number one travel and tourism destination. A signature piece to the President's order includes tasking the Departments of State and Homeland Security with increasing non-immigrant visa processing from China and Brazil by 40 percent in 2012. (Please see item below which discuss the White House progress report released this week)

MIA is the "Gateway to the Americas" ranking only second behind New York's JFK in international passengers, and is one of the busiest airports in the country. Indeed, MIA's international traffic contributed to the airport setting a new record in the first

quarter of 2012, with 10.2 million passengers being counted toward a nearly 10 percent increase from the first quarter of 2011.

MIA, Miami-Dade County and South Florida's business and travel industry groups strongly support the President and his Administration's tourism promotion efforts, particularly as it concerns increasing opportunities for travelers from Brazil. However, at current CBP staffing levels, MIA (like other large international gateway airports across the U.S.), will not be adequately equipped to appropriately handle the increased volume that could result from the President's order.

Realizing the important significance of the issue, this week Florida Governor Rick Scott sent the following letter (and attached) to DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, outlining the potential implications on Florida's economy and businesses and inviting Secretary Napolitano to visit MIA and witness first-hand the urgent need to address this staffing shortage.

Dear Madame Secretary:

I would like to bring your attention a serious situation concerning U.S. Customs and Border Protection staffing at Miami International Airport (MIA), which has the potential to damage Florida's image and international business competitiveness. Miami International Airport is the number one airport in the country for international flights and is second only to John F. Kennedy International Airport in international enplanements. Ninety-seven percent of all international airline passengers arrive in Florida at MIA.

The hard-working team at MIA stands ready to play a key role in welcoming the increased visitors that are expected to come as a result of the President's January executive order to increase travel and tourism to the United States. This initiative should be a boom for Miami and our country and could create thousands of new jobs in our state. To accommodate the expected increase in international passengers, MIA invested over \$180 million dollars in a new, state-of-the-art Federal Inspection Services (FIS) facility, which was inaugurated in July 2012.

In 2006, Miami International was selected as one of 20 airports in the country to be a Model Port. The goals of the Model Ports program were straightforward and included ensuring that passengers entering the United States were welcomed by Customs and Border Protection officers with respect, that the Customs waiting areas were calm and pleasant and that the Customs process was streamlined.

Unfortunately, the Model Port program goals are not currently being met in MIA's new FIS Facility because of insufficient Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staffing. Written comments often describe the MIA experience as "chaotic." In addition to the passport control lanes not being

adequately staffed, the exits from

Customs are also insufficiently staffed by CBP officers, which results in a bottleneck for passengers trying to exit the facility.

In preparation for the opening of the new FIS facility, MIA commissioned an industrial engineering firm to study line management and to model queuing configurations to maximize efficiencies in the FIS. MIA officials worked with local CBP officials in this study. The engineering models and recommendations reflected that for optimal operations, a minimum of 62 of the 72 lanes must be staffed at peak arrival periods.

CBP has not been able to meet the necessary staffing numbers in the new facility. As a result, customers, often numbering well over 1,000 daily, and their baggage are misconnected and must be re-booked on later flights, many leaving the next day.

This problem could potentially do considerable damage to Florida's international competitiveness, which could adversely affect job creation in our state.

Over one million jobs in Florida depend on international trade and investment, and this is one of the healthiest and fastest growing sectors of our economy.

As the efficient operation of MIA is a critical component of job creation in our state, I invite you to take a first-hand look at MIA's new FIS facility and the current challenges they face due to insufficient CBP staffing. The wonderful team at MIA, led by Airport Director Jose Abreu, stands ready to offer you a closer look at what we believe is a condition that warrants attention at the highest level; one which I am confident can be rectified with your assistance.

I want to thank you in advance for your assistance in helping us resolve this very critical issue for Florida.

Sincerely,

***Rick Scott
Governor***

MIA RECEIVES \$2.55 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT FROM USDOT/FAA

This week the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Transportation announced that Miami International Airport was the recipient of a grant for \$2,550,000 for the purchase of a FOD Detection System. The Foreign Object Debris detection

system will enhance safety by providing continuous monitoring and detection of foreign objects and debris on the runway.

SEQUESTRATION IMPACT ON DOMESTIC PROGRAMS

On September 14, 2012, the White House released a comprehensive report of the impact of the scheduled automatic spending cuts (i.e. sequester) scheduled to take effect beginning January 2, 2013. The automatic sequestration was triggered in late 2011 when the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction failed to propose, and Congress to enact, a plan to reduce the deficit by \$1.2 trillion over 10 years (fiscal years 2013 – 2022).

The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) report states that the scheduled cuts would be “deeply destructive” to national security, domestic investments and core government functions. The sequester would reduce spending in 2013 by approximately \$109 billion, to be split evenly between defense and non-defense discretionary spending and spread across more than 1,200 federal accounts. For 2013, domestic discretionary spending would be reduced by \$38 billion, defense spending would be cut by \$54.67 billion, Medicare would be cut by \$11 billion and other mandatory spending programs subject to the reduction would be cut by nearly \$5 billion; however, the sequester would not cut most mandatory spending programs, including Social Security, Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

The White House report calls on Congress to adopt President Obama’s plan to override the sequester by enacting “bipartisan balanced deficit reduction legislation,” which the President has said should include both spending cuts and increases to federal revenues. On Capitol Hill, however, Republicans are rejecting any tax increases to cover the cost of replacing the sequester while Democrats insist on including new revenue. OIA and the Federal Lobbying Team expect Congress to focus their attention on this critical issue during the lame duck session following the November elections, but there is growing concern that both sides of the aisle will not be able to come to a bipartisan agreement before the cuts are due to begin in January, 2013.

The following is a list of programs subject to cuts that are important to state and local governments, and the projected amount that would be cut from each program. The OMB report estimates that domestic discretionary programs would be cut by approximately 8.2 percent.

Agency/Account	Automatic Cuts in FY 2013
Economic Development Administration	
Public Assistance Programs	<i>\$34 million</i>
Department of Education	
Special Education	<i>\$1.036 billion</i>

Impact Aid	<i>\$106 million</i>
Education Improvement Programs	<i>\$373 million</i>
English Learners Education	<i>\$60 million</i>
Career, Technical and Adult Education	<i>\$142 million</i>
Higher Education	<i>\$188 million</i>
Student Financial Assistance	<i>\$140 million</i>
Department of Health and Human Services	
Low Income Home Energy Assistance	<i>\$285 million</i>
Substance Abuse and Mental Health	<i>\$275 million</i>
Department of Homeland Security	
Customs and Border Protection	<i>\$955 million</i>
Coast Guard	<i>\$439 million</i>
Transportation Security Administration	<i>\$643 million</i>
<i>Federal Emergency Management Agency –</i>	
Flood Mapping	<i>\$8 million</i>
State and Local Programs	<i>\$183 million</i>
Disaster Relief	<i>\$580 million</i>
Department of Housing and Urban Development	
Tenant Based Rental Assistance	<i>\$1.530 billion</i>
Public Housing Operating Fund	<i>\$325 million</i>
Public Housing Capital Fund	<i>\$154 million</i>
Community Development Fund	<i>\$279 million</i>
Homeless Assistance Grants	<i>\$156 million</i>
Department of Justice	
<i>Office of Justice Programs –</i>	
State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance	<i>\$92 million</i>
Juvenile Justice Programs	<i>\$21 million</i>

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)	<i>\$13 million</i>
Violence Against Women Prevention	<i>\$33 million</i>
Department of Labor	
Employment and Training Programs	<i>\$1.993 billion</i>
Department of Transportation	
Federal Aviation Administration –	
Trust Fund (Airport and Airway)	<i>\$415 million</i>
Facilities and Equipment	<i>\$229 million</i>
Federal-Aid Highways	<i>\$56 million</i>
Federal Transit Administration –	
Capital Investment Grants	<i>\$156 million</i>
Army Corps of Engineers –	
Investigations	<i>\$12 million</i>
Construction	<i>\$150 million</i>
Operations and Maintenance	<i>\$176 million</i>
Environmental Protection Agency	
State and Tribal Assistance Grants	<i>\$293 million</i>

(Compiled by the Alcalde & Fay Federal Lobbying Team) (Patton Boggs Federal Lobbying Team Memo attached)

WHITE HOUSE RELEASES PROGRESS REPORT ON NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM STRATEGY EXECUTIVE ORDER

Earlier this week, the White House released a progress report to outline actions carried out by the Departments of State and DHS in response to the President's Executive Order on travel and tourism. The President's Executive Order directed federal agencies to aggressively expand the nation's ability to attract and welcome visitors, while maintaining the highest standards of security.

Excerpts from the White House press release said, *"The U.S. tourism and travel industry is a substantial component of U.S. GDP and employment, contributing \$1.4 trillion in economic activity and 7.5 million jobs in 2011. The travel and tourism industry projects that more than 1 million American jobs could be created over the next decade if the U.S. increased its share of the international travel market. The Obama Administration is implementing important steps, as outlined in the National Travel and*

Tourism Strategy, to bolster job creation through a range of activities to better promote the United States as a tourism destination and make it easier for legitimate foreign travelers to spend their money in the United States, while enhancing our ability to protect Americans from national security threats.

“According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, international travel resulted in \$153 billion in U.S. exports in 2011, an 8.1 percent increase from 2010, and is the nation’s largest service export industry. This positive trend has continued throughout 2012 with international tourists spending \$13.7 billion in the United States in July 2012 alone, up \$350 million or 3 percent from the same month the previous year, and travel and tourism-related exports increasing, on average, more than \$1.1 billion a month during the first seven months of 2012. According to the travel industry and Bureau of Economic Analysis, international travel is particularly important as overseas or “long-haul” travelers spend on average \$4,000 per visit, which in turn supports and leads to additional travel and tourism-related jobs.

“Canada and Mexico remain our greatest sources of international visitors, with Consular officers at State’s ten visa-issuing posts in Mexico adjudicating more than 1,577,529 visas and border crossing cards from January through August 2012, an increase of almost 33 percent from the same time period in the previous year. The Department of State passed a 1 million visa milestone not only in Mexico, but also in China, and, just last month, Brazil.”

Highlights from the Progress Report:

Visa Processing Capacity Up, Wait Times Down

- **Exceeding the President’s interview wait time goal – 88 percent of applicants worldwide are interviewed within three weeks of submitting their applications.** In key markets such as China, Consular officers are keeping interview wait times to an average of five days in 2012 while managing a year-on-year 37 percent increase in visa demand. Consular officers in Brazil have brought wait times down by 98 percent, from a high of 140 days in São Paulo, to just two days right now, while also managing a 37 percent jump in year-on-year demand.
- **Streamlining Processing to Save Time without Sacrificing National Security:** A pilot program that allows consular officers to waive in-person interviews for certain nonimmigrant visa renewal applicants is operational at 52 visa processing posts in 28 countries. Consular officers have waived interviews for more than 120,000 low-risk visa applicants.
- **Expanding Facilities:** The State Department is investing millions of dollars to upgrade and expand its existing consular facilities. In China, State will open a new consulate building in Guangzhou in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, a consular section in Wuhan in FY 2014, and new consulates in Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre will open in Brazil by 2014. These investments in infrastructure will increase visa

processing capacity in Brazil by 140 percent and in China by 120 percent over 2011 levels. In Mexico, State continues to invest in new facilities, with new buildings opening in Monterrey in 2014, and DHS is using new technology extensively at the border to dramatically reduce wait times.

- **Staffing Increases:** By the end of 2012, the State Department will have created more than 50 new visa adjudicator positions in China and 60 in Brazil, including 43 hired under an innovative staffing program. With these staff increases, State met the Executive Order's 40 percent capacity increase target in Brazil in June 2012, and will meet the target in China by December 2012.

Visa Waiver Program Expansion Continues

- The Department of Homeland Security is currently evaluating Taiwan for Visa Waiver Program (VWP) designation following its nomination by State. Meanwhile, DHS is working with other Federal government agencies to increase the number of travelers from VWP countries. The Administration actively supports bipartisan legislation that would give DHS broader authority to expand the VWP while enhancing the program's already strong security standards. DHS is also proactively working with partner countries that are currently ineligible for the VWP but willing to complete a number of prerequisites for potential designation, for example the agreements to share information on individuals who may pose a threat to the security or welfare of the United States.

1.5 Million People Now Enrolled in Trusted Traveler or Expedited Screening Programs

- **Expanding CBP's Global Entry and TSA Pre✓™:** The CBP Trusted Traveler programs and TSA Pre✓™ program both facilitate travel for air passengers. Global Entry allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk air travelers upon arrival in the United States; TSA Pre✓™ is an expedited screening program at certain U.S. airports.
 - More than 1.5 million people, including over 325,000 new members this year, have access to CBP Trusted Traveler Programs. DHS processed 500,000 more Global Entry passengers in 2012, compared to the same time in 2011. South Korea joined the Global Entry program on June 12, 2012. Global Entry is now available at 40 airports.
 - As of the beginning of August 2012, over 2 million U.S. passengers received TSA Pre✓™ expedited screening at 23 participating domestic airports in partnership with Alaska, American, Delta, and United Airlines and US Airways. TSA expects to bring TSA Pre✓™ to a total of 35 domestic airports, encompassing 51 checkpoints, by the end of 2012. US Citizen members of CBP's Trusted Traveler programs are eligible for TSA Pre✓™.

- **Facilitating More Efficient and Secure Travel at the Border:** Membership in the joint US-Canadian Trusted Traveler program, NEXUS, at pre-clearance airports, land border, and seaport crossings between the United States and Canada is up 16.4 percent in FY 2012, and DHS is working with Canadian authorities to expand NEXUS facilities and membership. Membership in the SENTRI program on the southern border is up 8.8 percent in FY 2012. NEXUS and SENTRI travelers are respectively processed 58 and 63 percent faster than travelers through general lanes at land borders.

Improving the Traveler's Experience

- **Focusing on Customer Service:** A recent survey of travelers at airports in the Model Ports program – located at 20 airports representing 73 percent of international aviation travelers at ports of entry – indicates that 90 percent of travelers agree that DHS's U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers are welcoming and provide the right information at the right time in a hospitable manner. CBP port directors identify peak processing periods well in advance based on historical data and real time operational information provided by carriers and airport authorities. CBP uses this data to optimize staffing at Ports of Entry to minimize travelers' wait times.
- **Enhancing Checkpoint Efficiency:** More efficient domestic airport checkpoints benefit international travelers flying within and returning from the United States. In 2011, over 99% of federalized airports' checkpoint operational hours maintained wait times of less than 20 minutes.
- **Expediting Baggage Movement:** Under the Beyond the Border initiative with Canada, eight Canadian preclearance airports (Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Winnipeg) are upgrading their checked baggage security equipment to conform to Transportation Security Administration (TSA) standards. As a result, baggage for passengers from these airports who are connecting to other flights in the United States will not have to be rescreened.

Building Partnerships

- State and DHS are working with travel and tourism industry stakeholders to advance the shared goal of attracting international visitors to the United States. For example:
 - **Disney:** Industrial engineers from Disney Worldwide Services, Inc. are donating their time and expertise to evaluate consular sections in Brazil and China, where they will suggest improvements for queue management and other ways to improve the applicant experience.

- **American Express:** American Express and United Airlines now reimburse top-tier customers for Global Entry application fee. As of June 30, 2012, American Express has reimbursed nearly 90,000 Global Entry applications fees.

SENATOR NELSON'S VETERANS JOBS CORPS ACT OF 2012

The Veterans Jobs Corps Act of 2012 (S. 3457) was a piece of legislation introduced by Sen. Bill Nelson in July. The bill incorporated a variety of bipartisan bills that have been introduced during the 112th Congress, but it was narrowly defeated in the Senate earlier this week. The primary purpose of this legislation is to increase training and hiring opportunities for veterans.

Bill Summary

The following summary includes a list of key provisions of S. 3457. The bill would:

- Authorize \$1 billion in funding over a five year period (2012-2017). According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) the bill, as drafted, is fully paid for and would not contribute to the federal debt.
- Direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) to establish a veteran jobs corps to employ veterans: (1) in conservation, resource management, and historic preservation projects on public lands and maintenance and improvement projects for cemeteries under the jurisdiction of the National Cemetery Administration; and (2) as firefighters and law enforcement officers. The program would be required to prioritize employment for veterans who served on active duty on or after September 11, 2001.
- Direct the Secretary of Labor to carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing veterans seeking employment with access to computing facilities in order to: (1) match veterans with available jobs based on veterans' skills acquired as members of the Armed Forces, and (2) allow employers to post information about available jobs.
- Requires states to take into account military training when issuing licenses and credentials by directing the Secretary of VA, as a condition of a grant or contract to a state for certain veterans' employment and training programs, to require the state to demonstrate the consideration of any military training received by a veteran when approving or denying a commercial driver's license or a certification to be a nursing assistant or certified nursing assistant, or an emergency medical technician or paramedic.
- Direct the Secretary of Labor to establish minimum funding levels for specified veterans' benefits contracts and grants to ensure that each state receives sufficient funding to support at least one disabled veterans' outreach program specialist and

one local veterans' employment representative per 5,000 square miles of service delivery area within the state.

- Direct the Secretary of Labor, during the one-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the bill, to provide the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) – an interagency workshop coordinated by Departments of Defense, Labor and Veterans Affairs – to veterans and their spouses at locations other than military installations in at least three and up to five states selected by the Secretary based on the highest rates of veteran unemployment to assess feasibility of extending the program (Florida would likely qualify, depending on unemployment rate at date of enactment).

COUNTY'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION COMMENTS ON CUBAN HUNGER STRIKE

On Monday, members of the South Florida congressional delegation held a press conference in support of the more than 25 human rights and pro-democracy activists who are on a hunger strike. The hunger strike, initiated to protest the regime's brutal oppression and unjust imprisonment of political prisoners, includes well-known pro-democracy leaders such as Marta Beatriz Roque and Jorge Luis Garcia Perez "Antunez". Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Congressman David Rivera, and former Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart all participated in the event.

Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart: *"I am relieved that the hunger strike led by brave pro-democracy activists for more than a week has ended without loss of life, and that these heroes have succeeded in gaining support and solidarity from the international community. Furthermore, reports indicate that their courageous protest has led to the promised release of Jorge Vazquez Chaviano, who was unjustifiably imprisoned since attempting to see the Pope during His visit to Cuba in March."*

"Unfortunately, the Cuban people remain imprisoned by an oppressive regime that ignores their fundamental rights and continues brutal acts of repression against them. We cannot forget the Cuban people's daily struggle for freedom from tyranny. Until the unjust imprisonments, violent acts of repudiation, and relentless oppression end, we must continue our solidarity with Cuba's brave pro-democracy movement and its noble cause. We must also continue to demand free multiparty elections for the Cuban people."

"Cuba's pro-democracy activists have demonstrated the undaunted strength of their convictions at great personal sacrifice. They have proven once again to the Cuban people, and to the world, where Cuba's true leadership lies."

Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen: *"These courageous Cuban pro democracy activists desperately want the community of responsible nations to hear their pleas demanding freedom, liberty and respect for their human rights. My South Florida Congressional colleague, Mario Diaz-Balart, as well as the groups that joined us today"*

fully supports their efforts to focus world attention on the repression committed by the Castro regime against anyone who dares oppose them. Our message today to our Cuban brothers and sisters is that we stand in solidarity with them and we will continue denouncing the Castro brothers at every opportunity we get."

Congressman David Rivera: *"Last week a group of 30 Cuban dissidents led by Marta Beatriz Roque and Jorge Luis Garcia Perez „Antunez' began a hunger strike to protest the unjust incarceration of Jorge Vazquez Chaviano who was supposed to be released from a Castro regime prison on September 9th and was held an additional eight days without explanation. I commend the courageous people on the island who not only risked their lives in this instance, but who do so each and every day in their ongoing struggle for freedom, democracy and human rights in the face of an unwavering and brutal regime.*

"Securing the release of Jorge Vazquez Chaviano is without a doubt a moral victory for the dissident movement. However the fact that a hunger strike is even necessary because of the Castro regime's continually increasing level of repression is unacceptable. Jailing, beating and detaining peaceful protestors who are simply demanding their basic human rights is unacceptable.

"We must continue to stand in solidarity with brave men and women like Marta Beatriz and Antunez who represent the very best of the Cuban people and their desire to be free."

Former Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart: *"It is important for the heroic Cuban hunger strikers to know of the extensive international solidarity they have generated for the cause of Cuba's freedom."*

CONGRESSWOMAN WASSERMAN SCHULTZ ADDRESSES CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz opened this year's Congressional Black Caucus with the following statement: *"I am delighted to join my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus this morning at the 42nd Annual CBCF Legislative Conference. Working together, we can protect the fundamental right to vote for all Americans, regardless of their party or political beliefs. Voting rights are at the core of our democracy. The franchise strengthens our society and provides fertile ground for liberty to flourish. We cannot allow those who seek to consolidate power and put a thumb on the scales of the democratic process to succeed."*

PRESIDENT OBAMA & MITT ROMNEY VISIT MIAMI, RYAN HEADING DOWN ON SATURDAY

President Obama visited the campus of the University of Miami on Thursday. The President's swing through Miami followed a stop by Mitt Romney the previous day. The candidates appeared before the Univision forum on "the U's" campus, as each

candidate continues to target the increasingly important Hispanic vote in Florida. On Saturday, Republican Vice Presidential nominee Paul Ryan will be at the famous Versailles Restaurant in Miami.

SENATOR RUBIO HOLDS FED ASSIST HOURS AT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

In effort to directly engage with South Florida and Miami-Dade County constituents, the office of U.S. Senator Marco Rubio hosted FED Assist Hours at the Miami Dade County Stephen P. Clark Center (Government Center) this past Thursday.

CLIMATE COMMUNITIES

Thursday's Climate Communities webinar featured Dana Fischer, Residential Program Manager for Efficiency Maine. "What Works - Effective Energy Efficiency Retrofit Incentives" was the title of the webinar and it focused on Efficiency Maine. Efficiency Maine received a \$30 million award from the U.S. Department of Energy's Retrofit Ramp-up program to build a robust, sustainable retrofit program that is scalable and replicable in other jurisdictions. One of the challenges that Efficiency Maine has tackled is the use of energy efficiency incentives to build consumer attention and, ultimately, action. Efficiency Maine has tested a number of different incentive models, and has a better understanding of what works – what types of incentives are important, how much money is significant enough, and to whom incentives should be targeted.

According to the webinar, "Energy efficiency retrofits make financial sense. Energy improvements save money, and over time, pay for themselves. However, convincing a skeptical public that is saturated with offers that sound too good to be true can be difficult. A little sugar can go a long way, and a number of communities across the country are using incentives such as cash rebates to reduce upfront costs and build residential and commercial property owner interest in energy efficiency."

LOOKING AHEAD

- The Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference will take place September 19-22, 2012 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center located at 801 Mount Vernon Place, NW, Washington, DC, 20001.
- The Foundation for Democracy in Africa (FDA) in collaboration with Miami International Airport (MIA) is hosting the 3rd USAfrica Air Transportation Summit scheduled to take place October 10-12, 2012, at the Eden Roc Renaissance Miami Beach in Miami, Florida.

The week of September 24 – 28:

The House will not be in session next week.

The Senate will not be in session next week.

The House and Senate are scheduled to be in recess until November 13.

If you would like to stop receiving this report please send an email to the following address - intergov@miamidade.gov - with "REMOVE" in the subject line.

WASHINGTON WEEKLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 10 – SEPTEMBER 14, 2012

Below is an informal overview of the Washington D.C. activities of the Miami-Dade County Office of Intergovernmental Affairs:

THE SENATE WAS IN SESSION THIS WEEK

THE HOUSE WAS IN SESSION THIS WEEK

DEPUTY MAYOR ALINA HUDAK MEETS WITH COUNTY'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

On Thursday Alina Hudak, Deputy Mayor and Kathleen Woods-Richardson, Director of Public Works and Waste Management for Miami-Dade County were in Washington to meet with Miami-Dade County's Congressional delegation and the White House Council on Environmental Quality. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss a proposed EPA regulation that is required under the Clean Air Act of 1990.

Under the Act, EPA is required to develop Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) Standards for a variety of industry facilities, including Municipal Waste Combustor (MWC) MACT Standards, which would have a direct impact on a facility located within Miami-Dade County.

This facility, Covanta Dade Renewable Energy, began commercial operations in 1982 and serves the municipal waste disposal needs of the County, while generating power for residents. The facility processes 3,000 tons of municipal solid waste per day and 1,200 tons-per-day of biomass fuel, generating 77 megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity from two 38.5 MW turbine generators. Approximately 26,000 tons of ferrous (steel) metal and 2,000 tons of non-ferrous (tin, copper) metal are recovered and recycled by the facility each year.

Over the past five years, EPA has promulgated MACT rules for Medical Waste Incinerators, Utilities, Industrial Boilers and Cement manufacturers. Generally, the time period from initial release of draft rules to final promulgation is one year or less. The window for compliance is typically three years. And while it's not clear when the rules for the next MWC MACT Standards will be issued, there have been reports that the rules have been drafted by EPA and that the rule will be issued sometime within the next six to eight months.

The Deputy Mayor and Director wanted to engage in early discussions with federal officials and our congressional delegation to ensure that the rule is not drafted in manner that would have a negative impact on Miami-Dade County's facility. The delegation was sympathetic to the possible implications of the rule and agreed to help where possible to assist the county by speaking directly with the EPA.

CONGRESS AVOIDS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN, WILL PASS ANOTHER CR

This week, House appropriators introduced the anticipated six-month FY 2013 Continuing Resolution "CR" (H.J. Res. 117) which will fund the federal government through March 27, 2013. Shortly after its release, Senator John McCain announced that he would unveil a proposal to delay defense-related sequestration reductions by three months. Sen. McCain indicated that he may try to propose this as an amendment to the CR when it reaches the Senate (given leadership and appropriators' preference for a "clean" CR, he may also introduce the measure as a stand-alone bill).

On Thursday, the House voted 329 to 91 in favor of passing a six-month continuing resolution (CR) to fund all federal programs at the FY 2012 levels. Without passage of the CR, formula funding for programs of interest to local governments, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), along with grant disbursements could potentially be jeopardized.

By deciding to move forward with a CR, Congress has passed the debate regarding the FY 2013 appropriations bills on to the 113th Congress. Once convened, the new Congress will have less than two months of actual in-session time to advance the 12 FY 2013 appropriations bills. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees will need to reintroduce their respective versions of the appropriations bills when they convene in January, 2013, although they are likely to use their current bills as the foundation for any new versions.

Sequestration/"Fiscal Cliff"

The six-month CR will allow Congress to forego further work on the pending appropriations bills and avoid partisan debates over discretionary spending at least until after the November election, and more than likely until after the 113th Congress convenes in January. This is especially important as Congress will likely be spending the majority of the lame duck session working to address the pending sequestration scheduled to take effect in early January, 2013. As previously advised, the Budget Control Act (BCA) of 2011 established a Joint Select Committee that was to develop a proposal to achieve at least \$1.2 trillion in deficit reduction over 10 years. In late 2011, however, the Joint Committee announced that it could not reach agreement on a deficit reduction plan, thus the automatic funding cuts, known as sequestration, will be triggered unless Congress takes action before the January 3, 2013 effective date.

Approximately \$109 billion is scheduled to be cut from the federal budget in FY 2013 as part of the automatic sequester, and these reductions are divided equally between defense and non-defense programs. After factoring in cuts to those mandatory programs subjected to the reductions, the sequester would result in a nearly nine

percent across-the-board reduction to most discretionary programs, or nearly \$38 billion in automatic spending cuts.

In addition to the negotiations on the pending sequestration, Congress will also need to address the “Bush-era tax cuts,” which are scheduled to expire at the end of the calendar year. The House and Senate have so far been unwilling to engage in meaningful negotiations on this issue, and they are unlikely to consider an extension or modification of tax policy before the November elections. There have been reports that Congress will likely use the lame-duck session to reach an agreement to extend or modify these tax cuts. However, the impending “fiscal cliff” of automatic spending cuts and tax increases, and their impact on the economy and the nation’s credit rating, mean that Congress will need to make decisions during the lame-duck session that have the potential to dramatically impact the fiscal course of the United States and significantly affect future government spending.

Hanging in the Balance

The House and Senate leadership have also considered non-controversial legislation this week, including a reauthorization of the EB-5 Regional Center program, authorization of Department of Justice (DOJ) training for courthouse violence prevention, and a five-year reauthorization of a DOJ program that provides grants to local non-profits that assist with locating lost Alzheimer’s patients.

OIA and the Federal Lobbying Team do not anticipate consideration of a long-term reauthorization of the farm bill, despite recent pressure from agricultural organizations. The House Agriculture Committee passed its five-year reauthorization bill in July, but the House Leadership ultimately chose to not schedule floor time due to concerns about whether there was enough support to ensure passage; the Senate passed its version in June. With the proposed CR failing to include an extension of farm bill authorizations, a stand-alone short-term extension may be approved.

The Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee announced today that it has scheduled a hearing for September 20, 2012, titled “Water Resources Development Act: Growing the Economy and Protecting Public Safety.” The hearing will outline the general approach that the next Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) would take, as well as its potential for passage during the final months of the 112th Congress. As you recall, WRDA authorizes studies and projects within the Army Corps of Engineers mission areas including navigation, flood damage reduction, hurricane and storm damage reduction, shoreline protection, and environmental restoration. While the EPW Committee may try to move a WRDA bill later this year during the lame-duck session, passing the bill on the Senate floor could prove difficult, as would any House action on a Senate-approved WRDA bill.

OIA and the Federal Lobbying Team will continue to follow these and other Congressional actions of interest to you and provide an update accordingly.

FYI – CR Summary:

Rate of Operations – The CR continues funding at the current rate of operations for federal agencies, programs and services. To meet the bipartisan agreement between the House, Senate and White House that ensured a total rate of operations at \$1.047 trillion, a government-wide, across-the-board increase of 0.6 percent over the base rate is also included. In total, including all discretionary spending, the annual rate of the CR is \$26.6 billion below last year's level.

Disaster and War Spending – The bill continues funding for the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) at last year's level of \$6.4 billion. This funding is used to provide relief and recovery efforts following disasters, such as the recent Hurricane Isaac. The bill also provides \$88.5 billion in war-related funding for Department of Defense (DOD) Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), the amount requested by the Administration.

General Items – Virtually all policy and funding provisions included in currently enacted Appropriations legislation will carry forward in the CR. However, some changes to current law are needed to prevent catastrophic, irreversible, or detrimental changes to government programs, or to ensure good government and program oversight. Some of these provisions include:

- A provision allowing DoD to acquire supplies in other countries for use in Afghanistan.
- A provision allowing additional funding for nuclear weapons modernization efforts, to ensure the safety, security, and reliability of the nation's nuclear stockpile.
- A provision allowing flexibility for the Customs and Border Patrol to maintain current staffing levels.
- A provision allowing additional funding and flexibility to sustain Homeland Security cyber-security efforts.
- A provision allowing additional funding for the Interior Department and the Forest Service for wildfire suppression efforts.
- A provision allowing additional funding for the Veterans Administration to meet an increase in the disability claims workload.
- A provision extending the current pay freeze for federal employees, which includes Members of Congress and Senators.
- A provision allowing the launch schedule of new weather satellites to move forward, ensuring the continuation of critical weather information, especially in the event of weather-related natural disasters.

- A provision requiring every federal agency to provide spending plans to Congress to ensure transparency and the proper use of taxpayer dollars.

(Provided by the Alcalde&Fay and Patton Boggs Federal Lobbying Team)

OIA AND PORTMIAMI JOIN FLORIDA CUSTOMS BROKERS AND FORWARDERS ASSOCIATION ON THE HILL

OIA, PortMiami and the Florida Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association (FCBF) held meetings with members of the Florida Congressional delegation, Senators Nelson and Rubio and the Washington DC Office of Florida Governor Rick Scott this week. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss issues of mutual importance to Miami-Dade County and FCBF, including the development and implementation of a National Freight Policy, U.S. Customs Reauthorization, CBP and USDA inspector staffing issues and efforts to place a cold treatment facility for imported fruits and vegetables in South Florida.

MIAMI-DADE AVIATION DEPARTMENT AWARDED \$1.15 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT

Miami International Airport (MIA) was awarded a \$1,153,456 federal grant by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to be used for apron construction and improvements. According to the FAA announcement, the apron construction project is required to provide additional aircraft parking in the west side cargo area at MIA.

DOJ DELAYS PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE SCAAP REIMBURSEMENT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

On Wednesday, the U.S. Department of Justice announced that it would temporarily delay its decision to eliminate SCAAP (State Criminal Alien Assistance Program) payments to jurisdictions for the costs of incarcerating inmates whose immigration statuses are "unknown."

In early June, OIA joined staff from the National Association of Counties (NACo) and Washington Representatives from other counties and local governments across the country, including Los Angeles, El Paso and New York, in a meeting with U.S. Department of Justice officials to express concerns regarding changes to SCAAP.

SCAAP is administered at the federal level by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) in conjunction with the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security (DHS). SCAAP provides federal funding to states and localities for the costs of incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens with at least one felony or two misdemeanor convictions for violations of state or local law, and incarcerated for at least 4 consecutive days.

The proposed change to SCAAP funding would have ceased reimbursing local governments for the costs of incarcerating inmates classified as “unknown” according whether or not the inmate is listed in a federal database administered by ICE. The policy rationale for this change centers on DHS not being able to confirm the alien’s status (i.e. as undocumented) for eligibility of an SCAAP payment and according to BJA “in order to make better use of limited SCAAP funding and to ensure jurisdictions are reimbursed only for known undocumented criminal aliens.” This modification will ultimately have a disproportionate impact on local governments, since it will shift the cost of temporarily incarcerating these individuals to the local government.

While Miami-Dade County would stand to lose a relatively small amount of federal funding (approx. \$64,000 in 2010 and \$55,000 in 2011), it’s the County’s strong position that it should be reimbursed for any and all costs associated with the incarceration of federal inmates. OIA will continue to partner with NACo and member counties and work with DOJ to develop a solution to the issue.

MIAMI-DADE TRANSIT AWARDED \$2.5 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT

On Friday, U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Ray LaHood announced that 27 projects across the United States would receive a combined \$59.3 million in federal funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Clean Fuels Grant Program, which helps local transit agencies purchase and support cleaner, greener buses, thus moving the country toward greater energy independence.

Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) was one of those 27 projects selected, receiving \$2.5 million to retrofit older buses with new electric engine cooling systems intended to improve fuel economy, reduce emissions and prolong the life of MDT’s existing bus fleet.

MDT was notified last month by USDOT and FTA that the county was awarded a \$10 million federal grant. This particular project was selected on a competitive basis through the FY 2012 State of Good Repair Program and will allow MDT to purchase new fuel efficient buses. To recognize this federal investment, on Wednesday, USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood visited Metrorail’s new Miami International Airport Station to officially announce the award to county officials and representatives from each member of the county’s congressional delegation.

REPS. DIAZ-BALART AND RIVERA RESPOND TO EPA EMAIL DEPICTING ERNESTO “CHE” GUEVARA IN FAVORABLE MANNER

Congressmen Mario Diaz-Balart and David Rivera issued the following statements after media reports published an email sent by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) staff, which included a picture of Ernesto “Che” Guevara.

Said Rep. Diaz-Balart:

"It is outrageous that as we begin the month-long celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Environmental Protection Agency would send a staff wide e-mail that included a picture of Che Guevara. Che was a cold-blooded murderer who killed so many innocent victims. This Administration has granted visas to Mariela Castro and other top Cuban regime officials, offered the Castro brothers unilateral concessions, and now sends an email with a image of an anti-American mass murderer. This is not only offensive to victims and their families, but also to anyone who believes in freedom. This email does not celebrate Hispanic heritage, but rather insults everything that the Hispanic community stands for."

Said Rep. Rivera:

"It is deplorable that the Environmental Protection Agency would use a picture of a terrorist like Ché Guevara, especially in commemoration of Hispanic Heritage Month. Guevara was a ruthless murderer who helped the Castro brothers in their violent takeover to establish a dictatorial regime that is still terrorizing the Cuban people to this day. He was a mercenary with no regard for human life or civil rights as he tried to spread his brand of socialism throughout the world. Guevara wanted worldwide revolution and directed much of his vitriol at the United States, calling our country the 'greatest enemy of mankind' and advocating for our extermination and destruction by way of nuclear bomb."

"Americans of Hispanic descent have made important and valuable contributions to this country throughout generations. It is nonsensical and extremely disheartening that the EPA chose to showcase a killer as part of their celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. At best this is further proof of how out of step and tone deaf the Obama Administration is with the Hispanic-American community."

REP. DIAZ-BALART TO HOST SERVICE ACADEMY DAY AT U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart will host Service Academy Day at the U.S. Southern Command on Saturday, September 15, at 8:30AM. Representatives from the U.S. Naval, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Military, U.S. Merchant Marine and U.S. Coast Guard Academies will be on site to meet with and inform interested students about educational and career opportunities at the service academies.

High school students in U.S. Congressional District 21 interested in applying to a service academy or eager to learn more about serving in the U.S. Military are encouraged to attend. Parents and family members are welcomed to attend. As of today, more than a 140 guests have confirmed attendance in addition to various state and local elected officials. Currently, 14 students nominated by Diaz-Balart are completing work in West Point, the Naval Academy, Air Force Academy, or the Merchant Marine Academy. Eleven others have graduated and are now serving in the U.S. Military.

WHEN: Saturday, September 15, at 8:30 a.m.

WHERE: U.S. Southern Command 9301 NW 33rd Street, Doral, FL 33172

REP. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ: CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

South Florida Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz issued the following statement to constituents earlier this week in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month:

“During Hispanic Heritage Month, we honor the Hispanic community and pay tribute to the extraordinary contributions that Hispanics have made throughout our history, and continue to make to America every day. Hispanic values – faith, family, love of country – are American values. The Hispanic dream – the hope of a better, more prosperous future – is the American Dream.

Economically, culturally, and politically, Latinos are a vital part of our nation. As the fastest growing ethnic group in our country, the 52 million-strong Hispanic community makes America a better and stronger nation. Since the earliest days of the founding of America to today, Latinos have played a key role in shaping the American landscape. From David Farragut, an admiral who bravely fought in the Civil War to Dolores Huerta, a Latina labor leader and civil rights activist who struggled for economic equality.

From United States Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the first Latina to serve on the highest court in the land and to the approximately 1 million Latino veterans who have fought for our freedom, the Latino community is woven into the fabric of our American tapestry.

While these achievements are notable, we’ve still got work to do in order to address issues that affect the Latino community, from health care disparities to improving the high school graduation rate. I support President Barack Obama’s bold action to protect certain undocumented young people who are working hard, playing by the rules, and whose parents brought them here through no fault of their own. This decision means that young people here in Florida and throughout this country would have a real opportunity to succeed educationally, professionally and personally.

We must lift up those who strive for a better life for themselves and for their families. We must recognize the contributions many of these young people have already made to our society, and encourage their potential achievements. America is still a country full of possibility. American ingenuity and the American work ethic are second to none. The American dream of freedom, love of country, prosperity, job security, and access to a quality education should not be denied to those who are giving back to the country they love and have called home for

so many years. Our country was built on our diversity and the future success of the United States is inextricably linked to the future of the Hispanic community.

We are fortunate to have a thriving and diverse Hispanic community right here in South Florida. Many notable Hispanics call South Florida home - from Dr. Pedro Jose "Joe" Greer, who President Obama awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, to artist Romero Britto to singers Gloria Estefan and Jon Secada to actor Andy García.

I am proud to be an advocate for the people of South Florida, and my office is open to you. You can reach us in Pembroke Pines at 954-437-3936, in Aventura at 305-936-5724 and in Washington, DC at 202-225-7931. I'm also available online at <http://wassermanschultz.house.gov>, where you can sign up for my electronic newsletter, and on Facebook, at www.facebook.com/RepDWS where you can stay up-to-date on what I'm doing for South Florida.

I hope you'll join me in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month in South Florida! "

FIU TO HOST USAID ADMINISTRATOR DR. RAJIV SHAH FOR SPECIAL ADDRESS

This Friday (September 21) at 3:30PM, Florida International University will be hosting Dr. Rajiv Shah, Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development:

WHAT: ***"Students and Universities Leading the Future of Development"***

WHEN: ***Friday, September 21 – 3:30p.m.***

WHERE: ***FIU School of International and Public Affairs – Auditorium (125)***

In a release from FIU's Washington D.C. office:

"USAID carries out U.S. foreign policy by promoting broad-scale human progress while at the same time expanding stable, free societies, creating markets and trade partners for the United States, and fostering good will abroad. FIU is one of the agency's largest university partners, and they are one of the largest sources of our own research portfolio. Their funding has made possible much of our critical work abroad, such as reducing the impacts of disasters, advancing water sustainability in Africa, and reforming justice systems across the Americas.

The leading force in the transformation of USAID, Administrator Shah seeks to engage with FIU Students and the South Florida community on how we can help drive the agency's priorities, such as food security, global health, digital inclusion, innovation, and economic development. Of particular interest is how organizations like FIU and its partners are leading efforts at "open source" development strategies and playing an increasingly crucial role in "connecting and convening. It is an honor to host Dr. Shah

on campus and we know this is an excellent opportunity for our students and community to engage with a widely acclaimed change-agent.”

CONGRESSWOMAN WILSON ANNOUNCES \$1.25 MILLION DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GRANT FOR FLORIDA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

On Thursday, Congresswoman Frederica Wilson announced a 5-year \$1.25 million Preparation of Leadership grant from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) to Florida Memorial University (FMU). The grant will bolster FMU’s efforts to prepare its Masters of Exceptional Special Education (ESE) students to lead high-need classrooms and districts.

Said Rep. Wilson:

“As a lifelong teacher and former principal, I know the challenges facing ESE teachers and how hard they work to meet them,” said Rep. Wilson. “I am glad that President Obama understands those challenges. More importantly, I commend him for funding the programs that help ESE teachers sharpen their skills, so that they can do what they love more effectively – teaching. I also applaud FMU President Henry Lewis III and his staff for their hard work to secure this competitive grant.”

CONGRESSWOMAN WILSON STATEMENT ON ANNIVERSARY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

On Thursday, Congresswoman Frederica Wilson issued the following statement on the anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act, which was drafted by then-Senator Joe Biden and signed into law by President Clinton on September 13, 1994:

“Today, we mark the anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which then-Senator Biden drafted and President Clinton signed into law on September 13, 1994. VAWA was a huge step forward toward ending domestic violence, date rape, sexual assault and stalking. Because of this law, women have the critical services they need to overcome abusive situations and law enforcement and the courts can hold offenders accountable.

“Since the passage of VAWA, annual rates of domestic violence have dropped by more than 60 percent. While we can laud the progress we made, three women still die every day as a result of domestic violence – one in five have been raped and one in six have been victims of stalking.

“Because of the continued need to protect women and girls, I fully support the full reauthorization of VAWA and strengthening it to extend these protections and services to immigrants and the LGBT community. I call on the House Republicans to do the right thing – to move forward and not go backward in protecting our daughters and granddaughters – by bringing up the Senate-passed VAWA bill for a vote.”

CONGRESSWOMAN WILSON ANNOUNCES \$2,443,500 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION GRANT FOR OPA-LOCKA EXECUTIVE AIRPORT

On Wednesday, Congresswoman Frederica Wilson announced a \$2,443,500 Department of Transportation (DOT) grant, awarded through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), to build a service road for the Opa-locka Executive Airport. Opa-locka Executive Airport is the largest of Miami-Dade County's five general aviation airports and handles a variety of private, pleasure and business flights. The airport handles more than 100,000 flight operations each year. Added Rep. Wilson:

"This service road will enhance safety by providing access to both sides of the airport, eliminating the need for vehicles to cross an active runway," said Rep. Wilson. "It's a much-needed project, and I am glad to see that it is finally getting built thanks to President Obama and Transportation Secretary LaHood. Opa-locka Executive Airport is a critical transportation facility and economic engine in my Congressional district, and I am glad to support it."

CONGRESSWOMAN WILSON STATEMENT ON 20TH ANNIVERSARY DR. MAE JEMISON BECOMING FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMAN IN SPACE

On Wednesday, Congresswoman Frederica Wilson, a member of the U.S. House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, issued the following statement on 20th anniversary of Dr. Mae Jemison becoming the first African-American woman in space:

"Twenty years ago, on September 12, 1992, Dr. Jemison became the first African-American woman to go into space. Following in the footsteps of Neil Armstrong, who took 'one giant leap for mankind,' she fulfilled her lifelong dream by going into orbit aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour. Having presided over her initiation as an honorary member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., I am especially proud that Dr. Jemison brought our flag aboard the shuttle with her. As a doctor, Peace Corps medical officer, NASA astronaut, college professor and entrepreneur, she is an inspiration to minority students interested in science and technology. Because of what Dr. Jemison did and what she continues to do, today's young people are pursuing their own dreams."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE: MIAMI AREA RANKS #5 IN METRO EXPORTS

On Friday, the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration (ITA) announced new export data that shows the Miami/Fort Lauderdale/Pompano Beach metropolitan area's merchandise exports increased by \$7.3 billion – 20.2 percent between 2010 and 2011 – growing from \$35.9 billion to \$43.1 billion. This extraordinary growth has helped Miami to remain a top metropolitan statistical area (MSA) exporter compared to other regions across the country, ranking Miami #5 in the nation.

Key merchandise export categories for the Miami metropolitan area in 2011 included computer and electronic products, transportation equipment, machinery (except electrical), chemicals, and miscellaneous manufactured commodities. Top export markets for Miami included Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Switzerland.

“Exports are an increasingly important part of Miami’s economy as local businesses both big and small continue to look beyond our borders to increase their customer base,” said Francisco Sánchez, Commerce Under Secretary for International Trade and a Florida native. *“I have seen firsthand the benefits of exporting on the Miami economy as exports create new job opportunities across the region.”*

According to international trade figures released today by the International Trade Administration, 150 U.S. metropolitan areas (40.9 percent of all metropolitan areas) exported more than \$1 billion in merchandise in 2011, and 11 of these metropolitan areas exported more than \$25 billion, including the Miami area. Additionally, a vast majority of metropolitan areas (308, or 83.9 percent of all metropolitan areas) enjoyed increased exports between 2010 and 2011.

“These export numbers show that selling internationally has become a much more viable option for many Florida businesses,” said Eduardo Torres, Director of ITA’s U.S. Commercial Service in Fort Lauderdale. *“In many cases, the Internet, ease of transportation, and array of available export services has reduced the distance between exporter and importer to a click on a desktop. We’d like to help you realize your export potential”* added Torres.

ITA works with American businesses to identify export opportunities for their products and to support the President’s National Export Initiative, which aims to double U.S. exports by the end of 2014, and has a specific focus on helping metropolitan areas identify regional strengths in order to increase their exports and support local jobs. In 2011, for every \$1 billion in exports, an estimated 5,000 jobs are supported.

CLIMATE COMMUNITIES

Walt Yakabosky, Director of Training for the Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania joined this week’s Climate Communities webinar. Titled, “Model Green Jobs Training and Apprenticeship Programs “ it discussed the ECA is a national green jobs leader, that provides training for men and women of all backgrounds and levels of experience. ECA offers industry-driven training that includes classroom instruction, hands on lab work, and field experience. The webinar showcased ECA’s model green jobs training and apprenticeship program.

According to Climate Communities, “Green-collar jobs are good jobs. They pay family wages and provide advancement opportunities along career tracks. These jobs are difficult or impossible to offshore, as the work takes place in communities across America. For example, workers in the green economy are installing solar panels,

retrofitting buildings to make them more efficient, constructing transit lines, refining waste oil into biodiesel, erecting wind farms, repairing hybrid cars, building green rooftops, planting trees, and so much more.

“As local governments adopt sustainability plans for their communities, they must also consider if their workforce is ready to take action on those priorities. Green collar jobs require new skill sets, necessitating more education than high school, but less than a four-year degree. Preparing your community for the green economy demands effective training programs and appropriate support.”

LOOKING AHEAD

- Mitt Romney will be in Miami on September 19 and President Obama will be in Miami and Tampa on September 20. Both candidates will be participating in a forum hosted by Univision News' Jorge Ramos.
- The Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference will take place September 19-22, 2012 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center located at 801 Mount Vernon Place, NW, Washington, DC, 20001.

The week of September 17 – 21:

The House will be in session next week.

The Senate will be in session next week.

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 24 – SEPTEMBER 28, 2012

Below is an informal overview of the Washington D.C. activities of the Miami-Dade County Office of Intergovernmental Affairs:

THE SENATE WAS NOT IN SESSION THIS WEEK

THE HOUSE WAS NOT IN SESSION THIS WEEK

*ELECTION COUNTDOWN: 39 DAYS – FIRST PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE
NEXT WEEK ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3*

U.S. TRADE REP. RON KIRK VISITS MIAMI TO TALK ABOUT THE ECONOMY, INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND JOBS

Earlier today, the Beacon Council hosted United States Trade Representative, Ambassador Ron Kirk, for a discussion on the administration's efforts to grow the U.S. economy and increase jobs through exports and international trade.

In attendance for the event was Miami-Dade County Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz along with OIA, Miami-Dade Aviation Department, the Beacon Council, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and a number of other County officials and leaders in the South Florida business community.

Amb. Kirk spent some time with the group discussing regional-specific issues which have an impact on local governments and the business community, including a CBP staffing issue at Miami International Airport (see item below), visa-waiver status for Brazil, the importance of investing in South Florida's air and seaports as a driver for increased domestic manufacturing and cargo throughput, in addition to foreign investment and increased travel and tourism from Latin American countries.

FY13 APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE – CONGRESS PASSES ANOTHER CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Last week Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) to keep the government operating for the first six months of Fiscal Year 2013. The federal fiscal year starts on October 1. There are twelve appropriations bills that Congress should pass each year to fund all the various federal agencies and programs. Unfortunately, this year none of the 12 bills were enacted before Congress adjourned for the elections last Saturday. To prevent a government shutdown, Congress needed to pass legislation to allow the government to continue to operate. The result was the CR. The House passed it on Thursday, September 13 and then the Senate followed suit on the next Saturday morning. Both chambers adjourned for the elections until the middle of November.

The CR funds the vast majority of federal agencies at the level they received in Fiscal Year 2012 plus an increase of 0.6 percent. Only a very small number of exceptions were made. The CR did not include any controversial amendments (i.e. it was a “clean bill.”)

The CR runs until March 27, 2013. Both the Republican and Democratic leadership in Congress indicated a lack of willingness to deal with the budget during the lame duck session. There are other issues, like sequestration and tax rates, that need to be addressed before the end of the year.

What happens with respect to the federal budget for Fiscal Year 2013 will hinge on who controls the House and Senate. If the Republicans capture either the White House or the Senate, they will likely push for deeper cuts in the final budget. In the unlikely event that Democrats recapture the House, they will push for increased funding. If the election leaves a divided government, it's likely that Congress will pass another CR that runs for the rest of the fiscal year. *(Compiled by OIA and the Akerman Senterfitt Lobbying Team)*

FLORIDA CHAMBER SENDS THE STATE'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION A LETTER ON CBP STAFFING ISSUE

The Florida Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice President David A. Hart sent a letter to Senator Nelson and the entire Florida Congressional delegation this week reiterating concerns expressed in a letter sent last week by Florida Governor Rick Scott, which asked Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano to witness first-hand the impacts of a Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) staffing shortage at Miami International Airport (MIA). Both of the letters cite the issue's potential negative impact on Florida's economy and businesses.

OIA, Miami-Dade Aviation Department, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Gov. Scott's Washington D.C. office and the county's congressional delegation have been working together with DHS in recent months regarding the need for increased CBP staff at MIA. The urgency of the issue stems, in part, from a January 19, 2012 Executive Order signed by President Obama which directed his Administration to develop a national strategy to make the U.S. the world's number one travel and tourism destination. A signature piece to the President's order includes tasking the Departments of State and DHS with increasing non-immigrant visa processing from China and Brazil by 40 percent in 2012.

September 27, 2012

*The Honorable Bill Nelson
United States Senate
716 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510*

Re: Miami International Airport Needs More Customs Officials to Help Secure Florida's Future

Dear Senator Nelson:

International passengers arriving at airports across Florida are experiencing increasingly burdensome wait times as they process through customs. This delayed processing time frequently causes passengers to miss connecting flights and is of great concern to the Florida Chamber of Commerce in light of the important role that international tourism plays in our state's economy.

The Florida Chamber joins Governor Rick Scott in his recent request to U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano for more customs officials at Miami International Airport (MIA) – the largest airport in the nation for international passengers. As Governor Scott noted in his letter, the customs problem at MIA makes Florida less competitive on the international stage. That is why he requested Secretary Napolitano ensure that at least 62 of the 72 customs lines at MIA be open at all times.

More than 30,000 international travelers missed their connecting flights at MIA after waiting for customs in August 2012. Furthermore, large and small airports across Florida have expressed the same concerns and warn things will get worse if nothing is done.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Travel and Tourism, the United States is on pace for a record setting year for inbound tourism spending. This will not be sustainable over the long-term if visitor processing does not improve. Having international passengers wait for several hours in customs after flying for 8-12 hours is simply unacceptable. These types of delays, especially when compounded with missed flights, set back efforts at both the state and national levels to encourage international tourism.

Last year alone, Florida welcomed 9.3 million overseas visitors and more than 3 million Canadian visitors. Communities across the Sunshine State depend on international visitors. The Florida Chamber supports Governor Scott's request for more Customs and Border Patrol staffing in airports across Florida.

To secure Florida's future, this issue must be addressed or the Sunshine State could potentially miss an opportunity to grow the international tourism industry at both the state and national levels.

*Sincerely,
David A. Hart
Executive Vice President*

SOUTH FLORIDA MEMBERS OF CONGRESS PROMOTE JOB FAIR FOR VETERANS

In an effort to help veterans find employment, U.S. Reps. Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Ted Deutch along with Reps. Alcee Hastings and Frederica Wilson, are hosting a veterans job fair on Oct. 6 at the Fort Lauderdale Armory.

The event comes on the heels of Senate action on the Veterans Jobs Corps Act of 2012 (S. 3457) a piece of legislation introduced by Sen. Bill Nelson in late July. The bill incorporated a variety of bipartisan bills that have been introduced during the 112th Congress, but it was narrowly defeated in the Senate on a budget point of order last week. The primary purpose of the legislation is to increase training and hiring opportunities for veterans.

On Tuesday, September 25, Reps. Wasserman Schultz and Deutch discussed the upcoming jobs fair, including how veterans and their families can prepare before attending and how businesses interested in hiring a hero can participate. They were joined by representatives from the Broward Sheriff's Office, which is looking to hire more veterans and will be on hand at the job fair in October, along with many other local businesses. Lt. Col. Kim McDonald with the Florida Army National Guard was also at the news conference to talk about the Florida Guard Family Career Connection's success in helping soldiers and airmen find jobs.

REP. ROS-LEHTINEN SAYS ISRAEL'S CALL TO PREVENT A NUCLEAR IRAN MUST BE ANSWERED

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, made the following statement on Thursday after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed the United Nations General Assembly:

"As Prime Minister Netanyahu noted, a nuclear Iran cannot be contained. Iran must be stopped, before it goes nuclear. I stand with our steadfast ally, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and urge all responsible nations to stand with us against a nuclear Iran. The United States cannot alone impose the crippling sanctions that are needed to stop the nightmare of a nuclear Iran from becoming a reality.

"This afternoon, Prime Minister Netanyahu stood before the General Assembly and urged for responsible nations to set red lines on Iran, stating that the failure to place a red line invites more aggression than does their existence. Prime Minister Netanyahu cited the success of the red line drawn with regards to the closure of the Straits of Hormuz. We must therefore learn from such successes and make clear to the Iranian regime that there is a red line that we will not permit them to cross.

"Prime Minister Netanyahu's frustration is underscored by the UN's own inertia. Prominent members of the Iranian regime call for Israel's destruction

almost daily – Ahmadinejad himself called for Israel's elimination at a UN meeting on the „rule of law' this week. Yet, even as the IAEA provides a continuous stream of evidence of Iran's march towards a nuclear weapons capability in violation of UN sanctions, the UN has remained silent, with no real repercussions for the Iranian regime's transgressions.

“No longer can Iran be allowed to slip through the cracks. All sanctions measures must be fully enforced, no exceptions. Otherwise, by next year's General Assembly, the world may well be a much more dangerous place for the people of America, Israel, and all free nations.”

TSA Pre✓™ HITS 3 MILLION MARK

The U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) announced this week the agency has screened more than 3 million travelers through TSA Pre✓™ lanes. TSA Pre✓™ is currently available in 26 airports, including Miami International Airport, and operational with five airlines, including Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, United Airlines and US Airways.

TSA Pre✓™ is part of TSA's larger effort to implement risk-based security concepts that enhance security by focusing efforts on travelers considered high-risk and about whom the agency knows less. Eligible passengers include U.S. citizens of frequent traveler programs on participating airlines and current members of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Trusted Traveler programs, including Global Entry, SENTRI and NEXUS.

“We are pleased that traveler participation in TSA Pre✓™ continues to grow as we work towards our goal of reaching 35 airports by the end of this year.” said TSA Associate Administrator Doug Hofsass. *“We anticipate that TSA Pre✓™ will screen a total of about 5 million passengers by the end of 2012, a key milestone as TSA strives to implement a more risk-based approach to security and facilitate the process for those travelers deemed low-risk.”*

TSA has expanded TSA Pre✓™ benefits to U.S. military active duty members traveling through Charlotte Douglas International, Washington Dulles International, Ronald Reagan Washington National and Seattle-Tacoma International airports. In addition to TSA Pre✓™, TSA has implemented other risk-based security measures including modified screening procedures for passengers 12 and younger and 75 and older.

TSA will always incorporate random and unpredictable security measures throughout the airport and no individual is guaranteed expedited screening. TSA's multi-layered approach to security also includes behavior detection officers, explosives-detection systems, canine teams, and federal air marshals, among other measures both seen and unseen.

CLIMATE COMMUNITIES

On this week's Climate Communities webinar, "EPA's Smart Growth "Building Blocks" Technical Assistance" was joined by Kevin Nelson, AICP, the EPA's Building Blocks Program Coordinator. Kevin provided an overview of the Building Blocks program, discussed the types of technical assistance that EPA has previously delivered to communities, and described how to apply for Building Blocks and other smart growth technical assistance.

The EPA announced the availability of technical assistance to foster sustainable growth through its Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities program. EPA's Building Blocks program provides quick, targeted technical assistance to local and tribal governments using a variety of tools that can be applied in rural, suburban and urban areas.

The following technical assistance opportunities are available in this round:

- Smart growth and economic development to help communities get better financial results from public and private investments;
- Green street strategies for managing polluted stormwater;
- Land use strategies to protect water quality;
- Parking audits to make the best use of parking for existing and planned land uses;
- Bikeshare system planning to create alternative commuting options;
- Community design for aging populations to ensure residents can live at home as long as possible;
- Green building toolkit to overcome common barriers; and
- Strategies to help small cities and rural areas develop in ways that retain unique community characteristics

EPA will select up to 44 communities through a competitive process. Selected communities will work with EPA-supported teams of experts during a two-day, on-site workshop. Communities also receive recommendations outlining specific steps to implement the ideas generated during the site visit. The deadline for letters of interest is October 26, 2012.

VISIT FLORIDA CEO NAMED PRESIDENT OF BRAND USA

Chris Thompson, the president and CEO of VISIT Florida, was named president and CEO of Brand USA this week. Brand USA is a public-private partnership created to support the nation's travel industry. Mr. Thompson, who oversaw the expansion of VISIT Florida, will join the federal government's version of Florida's public-private tourism promotion arm. The Brand USA program was created by the Travel Promotion Act of 2010. The program plans to spend \$200 million annually to promote the United States to potential travelers overseas. It is funded by fees charged to international travelers to the U.S. along with private sector contributions.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Next week, OIA will join public safety personnel and representatives of the Ft. Lauderdale-Miami UASI group in meetings with congressional staff and agency officials. Members of the group from Palm Beach, Monroe, Broward and Miami-Dade Counties will be in Washington to meet with congressional offices and FEMA officials on Tuesday October 2 and Wednesday October 3. OIA has been working with Miami-Dade OEM and the UASI group over the past two years to protect the critical public safety funding provided by the UASI program to states and local governments.
- ***Panama – Business Gateway to the Americas Forum***
Thursday October 4, 2012, 7:30 AM to 2:00PM
U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Hall of Flags
1615 H Street
Washington, D.C. 20062
- ***"State of Cybersecurity and Law Enforcement Forum"***
Wed. October 10, 2012
USSS Miami Field Office
10350 NW 112th Avenue
Miami, FL 33178
- The Foundation for Democracy in Africa in collaboration with Miami International Airport is hosting the 3rd USAfrica Air Transportation Summit scheduled to take place October 10-12, 2012, at the Eden Roc Renaissance Miami Beach in Miami, Florida.
- **Sen. Marco Rubio "Mobile Office Hours" – Thur. October 18, 2012**
Miami-Dade County
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Stephen P. Clark Government Center
111 N.W. 1 st Street, Lobby Area
Miami, FL 33128

The week of September 24 – 28:

The House will not be in session next week.

The Senate will not be in session next week.

The House and Senate are scheduled to be in recess until November 13.

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