

WASHINGTON WEEKLY REPORT

August 22nd - August 26th, 2011

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

THE SENATE WAS IN SESSION THIS WEEK AND REMAINS IN PRO-FORMA SESSION (i.e. IN AUGUST RECESS)

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MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT AWARDED \$1.2 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDING

The Miami-Dade Police Department was notified this week by the Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications that they were awarded \$1,190,348 in federal funding for the FY 11 DNA Backlog Reduction Program. The objective of this program is to assist eligible States and units of local government to reduce forensic DNA sample turnaround time, increase the throughput of public DNA laboratories, and reduce DNA forensic casework backlogs. These improvements are critical to preventing future DNA backlogs and to helping the criminal justice system use the full potential of DNA technology.

Eligible States and units of local government were allowed to request funds to increase the capacity of their existing crime laboratories that conduct DNA analysis in order to analyze DNA samples more efficiently and cost effectively. The funds also could have been requested to handle, screen, and analyze backlogged forensic DNA casework samples. MDPD has three additional grants outstanding with DOJ. OIA will continue to work to help ensure the department receives these funds.

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (FIU) – STORM SURGE SIMULATOR

FIU's Federal Affairs office distributed the following information to congressional staff and administration officials earlier today, regarding FIU's continued effort to prevent loss of lives and property damage caused by storms:

FIU and Miami-Dade County have collaborated to create a user-friendly "[Storm Surge Simulator](#)." This model uses historical data and predictive capability to illustrate how a surge could impact homes in the Miami area.

Please use the following [link](#) to access the simulator which may also be of interest to your constituents. Additionally, here is a [local news report](#) from this week showcasing the simulator.

Although the simulator is currently “live” for Miami-Dade County, the technology developed at FIU’s [International Hurricane Research Center](#) (IHRC) is able to adapt such a system for national purposes. FIU is also proposing to develop a new generation, real-time surge forecast and visualization system to improve NOAA’s ability to forecast sea, lake and overland surges from hurricanes (SLOSH) along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts.

EARTHQUAKE ROCKS D.C. - HURRICANE IRENE UP NEXT

The Miami-Dade County Washington D.C. Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, along with much of the northeast and parts of the Midwest, sustained a 5.8 magnitude earthquake on Tuesday, a few minutes before 2pm. The county’s two staffers were unharmed, as they were coincidentally leaving a meeting with FEMA, and did not feel a thing. The county’s office did not suffer any damage, and normal operations resumed Wednesday. This weekend, most of the eastern seaboard is bracing for Category 2 Hurricane Irene, with expected sustained winds of 110mph. As a result, the Sunday dedication of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial has been postponed. Additionally, the Governors of Delaware, Connecticut, New York, Virginia, New Jersey and Maryland declared states of emergency and the U.S. Navy has sent 38 ships to sea to avoid the impact of the hurricane. The last major hurricane to hit the U.S. was in 2005 when Hurricane Wilma made landfall in southwest Florida.

OIA PARTICIPATES IN DHS/FEMA BRIEFING ON UASI FUNDING

On Tuesday, August 23rd, OIA participated in a briefing with the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and FEMA. The purpose of the briefing was for OIA to receive details about the UASI funding formula, as well as to continue building a relationship with the agency to position the County for future collaboration and funding opportunities. OIA met with Jeanne Webster, Executive Officer, Grants Programs Directorate and James T. Marks, Deputy Director, Grants Programs Directorate, Preparedness Grants Division.

SENATE MAY ACT ON HIGHWAY BILL IN SEPTEMBER

In a stakeholder meeting held earlier this week, Chairwoman Boxer (CA) of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee indicated that the Senate is expected act on its draft version of the surface transportation bill and a short-term reauthorization in the second week of September. OIA and the DC lobbying team will continue to monitor developments as the measures move through the legislative process.

MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AEROSPACE SHOW (MIAS) - UPDATE

Beacon Council, OIA, the DC lobbying team and Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen’s office held a conference call this week to discuss ongoing efforts to secure the necessary Federal approvals to host the MIAS at Homestead Air Reserve Base. The Congresswoman is leading an effort to convene a meeting with Air Force personnel and

county officials to determine acceptable next steps in the process. The target date for the meeting is any day prior to Labor Day. The meeting request is pending.

PORT OF MIAMI DEEP DREDGE - UPDATE

OIA and the D.C. lobbying team continue to work with Seaport Director Bill Johnson to obtain the necessary federal approvals for the next phase of the Port's Deep Dredge Project, a construction advanced funds agreement.

Last month, Director Johnson met with key Administration and Congressional officials to ensure that the construction funds agreement is approved by the House and Senate Appropriations Committees prior to the August recess. The Senate has signed off on the agreement and the House is expected to sign off in the very near future. The Office of Management and Budget has already given its approval for this next phase of the project to proceed. OIA continues to work with the Florida Congressional Delegation, key members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and the Administration, to complete this critical phase of the Port of Miami's deep dredge project.

URBAN AREA SECURITY INITIATIVE (UASI) FUNDING - UPDATE

On Thursday August 25, OIA, DEM and MDPD participated in a second conference call with other South Florida jurisdictions to discuss the goals and strategies for adequate UASI funding, and inclusion of the combined Ft. Lauderdale/Miami UASI as a Tier I UASI.

UASI jurisdictions represented on the call were Broward County, City of Ft. Lauderdale, City of Homestead, City of Miami, City of Miami Gardens, City of Miramar, City of Pembroke Pines, Miami-Dade County, Monroe County, and Palm Beach County.

The discussion focused on specific UASI priorities and ensuring a unified lobbying strategy in response to FY2012 reductions in the House Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, with the Senate expected to take up the bill after the August recess. The group plans to reconvene during the last week of August to set a final date for meetings with South Florida congressional delegation members and staff, in addition to relevant committee members and staff.

Earlier this year, Chairman Martinez joined elected officials nationwide, including City of Miami Mayor Regalado and Orange County Mayor Jacobs, in successfully urging Congress to remove language in the FY2012 House Homeland Security Apportions bill that would have only provided funding to ten UASI jurisdictions.

MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (MIA) – D.C. MEETINGS (*POSTPONED UNTIL OCT*)

MIA Director Jose Abreu was scheduled to be in Washington this week for a series of official meetings to discuss issues with industry and administration officials along with

visits with the county's congressional delegation. Unfortunately, due to the earthquake and impending hurricane, these meetings were postponed until early October. The purpose of the meetings will be to discuss the importance of a timely reauthorization of the FAA bill and the urgent need to quickly pass the pending Colombia Free Trade Agreement. OIA will participate in the meetings and accompany the director during his rescheduled trip.

CLIMATE COMMUNITIES - WEEKLY CALL

On Thursday, Climate Communities held their weekly webinar titled "Utilizing Social Media to Enhance Local Energy and Sustainability Outreach Efforts." The call focused on how an effective community outreach strategy is an important aspect of any local energy and sustainability initiative. According to Climate Communities, "Increasing community awareness of local sustainability efforts can help to increase participation in local initiatives, publicize successes, and catalyze community interest in sustainability.

As more and more Americans use social media, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, it is important that local outreach strategies incorporate these new media tools. Using social media not only allows local governments to reach community members that might not follow traditional media sources, but also allows for greater interaction and feedback between local officials and residents." The webinar highlighted the work done by Nicole Sunstrum, Emerging Media Coordinator for the State of Michigan and Sarah Wu, Policy and Outreach Manager for the City of Philadelphia's Mayor's Office of Sustainability. They both discussed how they have developed strategies for utilizing social media effectively and shared some of the challenges in implementing these strategies.

HUD VOUCHER ISSUE

OIA continues to work with Rep. Diaz-Balart's office and the rest of the county delegation regarding funding discrepancies with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). At issue are provisions within the FY 2009 THUD Appropriations Act which required HUD to rescind \$750 million in unspent Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) funds from 2400 public housing authorities.

Earlier this year, MDPHA discovered that while the department was in HUD receivership, the \$43 million recaptured from MDPHA was the second largest recapture amount of the top ten programs experiencing recapture in the country. The amount was also disproportionate in relation to the size of the other PHA's respective HCV programs.

In May, Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners Chairman Joe Martinez sent a letter to HUD requesting corrective action and an explanation for the disproportionate recapture amount. HUD's response letter did not provide an explanation regarding the recapture amount, nor did it indicate the agency would take corrective action to address this inequitable treatment. On June 16, Chairman Martinez again sent a letter to HUD,

requesting an adequate explanation regarding HUD's calculation of the recapture amount and lack of corrective action.

Director Gregg Fortner, OIA and the federal lobbying team continue to seek an acceptable response and resolution from HUD.

GOP PRESIDENTIAL FIELD - 2012

Here is a list of candidates who have announced they will run, and some other potential candidates.

OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED WILL RUN:

Michele Bachmann – Minnesota Congresswoman
Herman Cain – former CEO of Godfather's Pizza
Newt Gingrich – former Speaker of the House
Jon Huntsman – former Gov. of Utah & former Ambassador to China
Gary Johnson – former Gov. of New Hampshire
Ron Paul – Texas Congressman
Rick Perry – Gov. of Texas
Buddy Roemer – former Gov. of Louisiana
Mitt Romney – former Gov. of Massachusetts
Rick Santorum – former Sen. from Pennsylvania
Thaddeus McCotter – Michigan Congressman

YET TO OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCE:

Rudy Giuliani – former Mayor of New York City
Sarah Palin – former Gov. of Alaska
Paul Ryan – Wisconsin Congressman, House Budget Committee Chairman

FEDERAL LOBBYIST REPORTS

Please use the following link to access the monthly lobbyist reports for the Washington D.C. lobbying team - http://www.miamidade.gov/intergov/federal_lobbyist.asp

NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR: AUGUST 29 – SEPTEMBER 2

The House & Senate will be in pro-forma session (in August Recess) for the month of August. They will return from recess after the Labor Day holiday.