



REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners
Chairman Joe A. Martinez
2004 – 2006



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REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Two years ago, I was elected by my colleagues on the Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners to be their Chairman. In that capacity, I was charged with guiding the legislative branch of our county in its efforts to serve its residents.

To that end, I and the other members of the Board have worked conscientiously with the County Manager to improve the quality of life for all residents of Miami-Dade County through legislation as well as policy initiatives.

It has been an honor to work in conjunction with my colleagues to achieve the goal for which we all strive: *delivering excellence every day*. What follows is an overview of the accomplishments of the Office of the Chair during my tenure.



Legislative Accomplishment

Before I began my tenure as Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, several crucial issues were identified and ways to help our citizens through legislation were devised. Through the efforts of my staff and the cooperation of my fellow commissioners, many of those goals were met. The following are some of those issues and the legislation I sponsored to address them.

Healthcare

Miami-Dade County continues to experience a healthcare crisis with respect to uninsured residents, specifically in the elderly and children populations. With cuts in federal funding for Medicaid, the rolls of the uninsured will continue to increase. In order to help our citizens gain better access to health care information and assistance, I put in motion several legislative items.

Task force

Faced with the magnitude of this problem, I sponsored an ordinance creating the BCC's healthcare task force. It is critically important that avenues for funding insurance coverage for the uninsured are explored. Improving access to primary care services and educating residents through community outreach regarding the benefits of primary care is of the utmost importance. The healthcare task force through its recommendations of viable and workable solutions assists the BCC in formulating direction to the Public Health Trust and the Office of Countywide Healthcare Planning in order to alleviate this crisis.

“Improving access to primary care services and educating residents through community outreach regarding the benefits of primary care is of the utmost importance.”

KidCare

I also sponsored the following resolutions:

A resolution directing the County Manager to launch an education and awareness campaign to focus on informing Miami-Dade County residents of year-round KidCare program enrollment.

With proper KidCare advertising campaign efforts, Miami-Dade County can inform its residents of year-round enrollment opportunities, which can result in the enrollment of a significant number of children that are eligible for this important subsidized children's insurance program.

A resolution urging the Florida legislature to enact legislation providing for year-round enrollment in the Florida KidCare program as being proposed in the Senate Bill 1324 and House Bill 569 sponsored by Senator Nan Rich and Representative Rene Garcia, respectively.

Hurricanes

History has shown Miami-Dade County is highly susceptible to hurricanes. With the increased number of storms in recent years, it is more important than ever to make sure

the county is well-prepared and protected against the effects of such a major natural disaster. The following are pieces of legislation created to that end.

Relief to Residents of Miami-Dade County

On December 9, 1005, the Florida Legislature enacted House Bill 15-B, 2005 Special Session B, which allows the governing body of any county that has been



declared a major disaster area approved for individual assistance by the President of the United States to adopt a certain early-payment discount for the payment of taxes by emergency ordinance. As such, I sponsored said ordinance to assist Miami-Dade County residents following a busy hurricane season.

Hurricane Season

On Monday, March 13th, 2005 I, along with Publix Super Markets, announced that the major grocery store chain planned to install 400 stationary and mobile generators in store locations throughout South Florida and other hurricane-prone areas.

Publix Super Markets took this important private sector initiative without awaiting the outcome of two County ordinances, which would have mandated emergency response plans from retail shops and gas stations.

One of the ordinances requires food stores to establish an emergency response plan to provide food within 24 hours of a storm. Commissioners Carlos Gimenez, Javier Souto, Dorrin D. Rolle, Jose Pepe Diaz and Commissioner Dennise C. Moss co-sponsored the ordinance.

In addition, to better serve the community, the Board of County Commissioners created the Emergency Command Post serving as the nucleus for communication between Federal, State and local agencies and as a temporary headquarters for the commissioners to coordinate the county-wide distribution of food, water, ice and other services.

Championing County Issues

Not all of the work of the County Commission can be accomplished within the confines of the Stephen P. Clark Center. Thus, I have

led delegations of Miami-Dade County legislators on trips to the state and national capitals to support the county's interests.

Tallahassee Fly-In

In my two year term, I led delegations of commissioners to the annual "Miami-Dade County Days" in Tallahassee. The trip's main purpose was to meet with State legislators and garner their support for County initiatives and legislative priorities.

Washington Fly-In

I also led two delegations of commissioners to the "Miami-Dade County D.C. Fly-In" in the nation's capital. The trip's main purpose was to meet with members of Congress and garner their support for County initiatives and legislative priorities.

Modeled after the annual "Miami-Dade County Days" trip to Tallahassee, delegation members met with U.S. Senators and Representatives to present and discuss the County's financial needs and objectives. High on the list of Miami-Dade's priorities this year was homeland security -- an issue in the forefront especially after the controversy over the proposed sale of commercial operations at six American ports, including the Port of Miami, to a foreign-owned company, Dubai Ports World. Other security-related matters included congressional support for funding for terminal modifications to integrate explosive detection systems at Miami International Airport; increased staffing levels at MIA security checkpoints; and establishing a national Department of Homeland Security facility in the county.

Among the critical issues the delegation discussed with congressional members included hurricane recovery and mitigation, workforce housing, beach erosion control, the 7th Avenue Transit Hub, pandemic avian



flu funding, agriculture disaster assistance and the mosquito control airplane.

Conservation efforts

One of the most important missions of a responsible government is to lead by example. As such, it is important to engage in activities that are ecologically responsible. To that end, Miami-Dade County government, under the guidance of the BCC has made several important strides toward showing our fellow citizens the importance of preserving our environment.

Miami Earth Dade

On March 20, 2006 at 1:26 p.m., as the geometric center of the sun crosses the equator, Miami Earth Dade was officially kicked off. Miami Earth Dade is a program aimed to convey environmental consciousness to the citizens of Miami-Dade County.

The purpose of Miami Earth Dade is to promote environmental awareness, education and action that compliment and do not detract from the fact that we are one human family and that we are the Earth's trustees. As such, we pledge to do our part in preserving our ecosystem.

Water Conservation Plan

I sponsored a resolution approving the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Water Use Efficiency Five-Year Plan, a goal-based, accountable and measurable water conservation effort.

Previously, resolution R-1271-05, under my sponsorship, directed the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department to develop a long-range water conservation plan.

Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (MDWASAD) has long been the water supplier for most of Miami-Dade County. As such, it has an exemplary record in regional and county-wide water planning efforts. MDWASD continues to take and active role in South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) water planning groups, such as the Lower East Coast Regional Water Supply Plan and the Water Resources Advisor Commission, and is also an active participant in building the Conserve Florida program. In order to be current with the evolving legislative climate discussed in the Five-Year Plan's executive summary and to commit to a more accountable approach to water conservation, MDWASD is being proactive and updating its Water Conservation Plan as a Conserve Florida goal-based program to be implemented over a five-year period. This plan greatly improves upon the previous Water Conservation Plan by including quantifiable Best Management Practices with

"...we pledge to do our part in preserving our ecosystem."

water servings and cost-effectiveness goals that will be evaluated on an annual basis.

This Water Use Efficiency Five-Year Plan is part of a long-range water conservation planning process which incorporates the goal of responsible stewardship of natural resources, while safeguarding the ongoing business practices of the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department. It is a goal-based, accountable plan that is tailored to the needs of the MDWASD service area. Its purpose is to achieve improved water use efficiency through implementation of proposed Best Management Practices that can substantially contribute to:

Accommodating future economic development and population growth while protecting the resource;



Reducing or deferring costs of maintaining and expanding water delivery, treatment and disposal systems;

Reducing energy and maintenance costs of MDWASD facilities.

The overall goal of this Water Use Efficiency Five-Year Plan is to prevent and reduce wasteful, uneconomical, impractical or unreasonable use of water resources and includes specific annual and five-year goals of water savings and cost-effectiveness.

Green Lodging Program/Water Conservation Plan

I also sponsored a resolution, after working closely with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), authorizing the execution of a memorandum of understanding with the FDEP for the purpose of assisting in implementation of the Green Lodging Program, which assists hotels and motels in protecting Florida's natural resources. This collaborative program works towards encouraging Miami-Dade hotels and motels on appropriate water conservation initiatives for their respective establishments.

Illegal Dumping Task Force

Illegal dumping is one of the most ecologically damaging acts our county faces. Thus, I sponsored a resolution directing the County Manager to Create the Community Awareness Program Task Force for Miami-Dade County.

My office developed a program/project with the intention of increasing community awareness of the negative impact which illegal dumping inflicts upon the environment and created a multi-departmental task force as one of the key components in expeditiously addressing and resolving illegal dumping and related issues in District 11. A multi-departmental task force consisting of

Team Metro, DERM, the Building Code and Compliance Department, the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Solid Waste Management Department, the Public Works Department, the Office of the Chair and the 311 Answering Center met at the District 11 Office. This multi-departmental task force has been deemed necessary to continue the project on a county-wide basis and to develop and implement additional activities and projects to address and remedy illegal dumping throughout the county.

The Task Force's recommendation, as supported by the Board of County Commissioners:

A resolution directing the County Manager to develop a comprehensive program to address illegal dumping which shall include a reward program for information leading to the arrest of persons who have committed illegal dumping in Unincorporated Miami-Dade County, using 25 cameras on a rotating basis to detect and punish illegal dumpers at "hotspots" within the county, and using the "Crime Watch" resources to help report incidents of dumping and to identify the resources to fund the program.

Seniors

Several measures to help improve the quality life were put into place to assist our neediest of citizens, our senior citizens.

Exempt Seniors from Certain Fees

I sponsored an ordinance relating to building permits, fees and charges, amending section 8-12 of the code of Miami-Dade County to exempt senior citizens from the payment of fees under certain circumstances. This exemption is to assist those senior citizens in our community to make much-needed improvements to their homes and bring



unsafe structures up to code at a reduced cost.

Housing

I also sponsored a resolution urging the Florida legislature to adopt House Joint Resolution 79 and Senate Joint Resolution 1430, which would propose a constitutional amendment to freeze the tax assessments on property of qualifying senior citizens receiving homestead exemption. Although this bill did not pass during this past session, I remain optimistic because the Legislature chose to study this issue along with the affordable housing issue and report back to the legislature next year with same support from Representative Juan Carlos Zapata and others.

Responsible government

One of the hallmarks of good government is its willingness and ability to police itself. If a government isn't vigilant in its efforts to hold itself accountable to the people it serves, it cannot be considered successful. To that end, I have sponsored legislation that will help keep a watchful eye on the business of the people.

Ethics

I sponsored and passed an ordinance amending section 2-11.1.1 of the code of Miami-Dade County relating to ethical campaign practices.

An ordinance amending section 2-1074 of the code of Miami-Dade County relating to commission on ethics and public trust was also passed. The ordinance amends the timetable for handling complaints; provides for determination of intentional or unintentional violations; and amends section 1-1074 (t) relating to groundless or frivolous complaints.

Governmental Structure Task Force

On December 14, 2004, the County Commission adopted Resolution R-1490-04, sponsored by me, which created the Miami-Dade County Task Force on Governmental Structure. The Task Force on Governmental Structure was charged with the responsibility of addressing, among other issues, the procurement process and the effectiveness and efficiency of various forms of governance

Governing for Results

I also sponsored an ordinance establishing a "governing for results" framework in Miami-Dade County for the purpose of improving service delivery, managerial and legislative decision-making, and public trust in county government; establishing requirements for strategic planning, business planning, and the allocation of County resources; establishing guidelines for managerial accountability, performance measurement, monitoring and reporting, and performance based program reviews.

Building Better Communities Bond Program

I sponsored a resolution pledging to the citizens of Miami-Dade County that the BCC will deliver in a timely manner those capital projects approved as part of the People's Transportation Plan, Building Better Communities Bond Program and the Multi-year Capital Plan. The resolution was a collaborative effort with the City of Hialeah, the City of Miami and the Miami-Dade County School Board.



Other Legislation

Housing

Creating affordable housing in Miami-Dade County is essential. Though the county's housing market has experienced significant growth, opportunities for the working class to experience the joy of home ownership have been lacking. In addition, because of the recent media coverage regarding the Miami-Dade Housing Agency (MDHA), I created the Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee, charged with identifying, analyzing and evaluating the allegations raised and the history that gave rise to these allegations. The committee is charged with identifying how public funds were expended and monitored as well as develop a plan to address and correct the issues identified.

Transportation/DMU (Diesel Multiple Unit) Demonstration Project/Tri-Rail Expansion

Miami-Dade County, is evaluating the use of the existing CXS freight railroad alignment to provide commuter rail service from the southwest part of the county, in the vicinity of Metrozoo, to the Tri-Rail Miami International Airport Station (future site of the Miami Intermodal Center). This service would alleviate vehicular traffic along several of our severely congested roadways. The service would also reduce commuter travel time and fuel consumption while providing immediate relief to users.

The South Florida Regional Transportation Authority/Tri-Rail would operate the service. The objective is to provide immediate service along the corridor. These enhancements would include track upgrades, additional stations and double tracking to increase headways to 20 minutes.

On October, 2006 Chairman Martinez successfully lead a Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) demonstration ride. The proposal

would allow the DMU railcar to transport passengers using existing CSX railroad tracks that run parallel to State Road 836 (Dolphin Expressway) past the Miami-Dade International Airport and toward Metro Zoo at the south end of the county. Under Chairman Martinez' plans, the railcar will connect to Metrorail at the Tri-Rail/Metrorail Transfer Station.

Social Services/Enhancement of Victim Services Plan

Realizing the need to improve the County's Services provides to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, I requested that the County Manager study the feasibility of improving the existing service delivery system. In July, the County Manager responded to the request on the enhancement of Victim's Services in Miami-Dade County. The report, prepared jointly by the Human Services and the Police departments, assessed the current state of domestic violence services and recommendations for improvement.

The proposed plan includes two key components: The establishment of the initial Miami-Dade Coordinated Victims Assistance Center (CVAC) and the implementation of the Countywide Victims Services Network. The CVAC, inspired by aspects of the San Diego Family Justice Center, will establish the structure and operational model for co-located victim assessment, advocacy and referral services and access to the processes of protection and investigation afforded by the law enforcement and justice system. The CVAC will be decorated in a warm and appealing manner with comfortable furnishings to provide a sense of calm and safety. The design will include quiet rooms for victims and their families that will foster relaxation and clear thinking. Funding for such proposals were allocated and also for the first time ever they received a grant allocation.



Immigration/Wet Foot Dry Foot Policy

Because Immigration is one of the most hotly debated and crucial issues in Miami-Dade County, I sponsored a resolution urging the federal government to reconsider the implementation of its “wet foot, dry foot,” policy.

The resolution and a letter, with supporting material, was sent to President Bush, the United States Senate and the House of Representatives strongly encouraging them to take another look at the “wet foot, dry foot” policy and establish specific guidelines, consistent with the original intent of the policy, for federal employees to follow.

Education

I sponsored a resolution urging Governor Jeb Bush and the Florida Board of Governors to approve the placement of a medical school at Florida International University. Since the time of the resolution, the Governor and the Board of Governors have approved the creation of this educational institute.

Tourism/Economy

I sponsored a resolution supporting that the South Florida Super Bowl Host Committee's bid to host the 2009 Super Bowl XLIII. This initiative would be a great economical boost for Miami Dade County.

Programs

Included in my duties as the head of the County's legislative branch is the creation and implementation of programs to help improve the quality of life for the residents of Miami-Dade County. The following are some of the programs that have been implemented by the BCC in the last two years.

County-wide Expansion of the Dial-A-Life Program

I sponsored a resolution directing the County Manager to provide reports to the County Commission on a semi-annual basis identifying surplus cellular phones for use in the Dial-a-Life program. The Dial-A-Life program provides donated cellular phones to at-risk individuals that will dial directly to 911 emergency services.

Partnership for Recovery/No Blue Roofs Program

The BCC approved a resolution sponsored by myself authorizing the County Manager to allow county employees to contribute the value of accrued annual and holiday leave time to the Partnership for Recovery to aid Hurricane Wilma victims in this county. After Hurricane Wilma caused severe damage to parts of Miami-Dade County, members of the private and public sectors of the county joined to help the neediest victims of Hurricane Wilma and established a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 corporation for this purpose, known as the Partnership for Recovery. The No Blue Roofs Program was created to assist eligible low-income Miami-Dade homeowners with roof damage and roof repairs.

Community Outreach Events

2nd Annual Health, Safety, & Hurricane Readiness Expo

Recognizing the lack of adequate health care for low income individuals and families in Miami-Dade County, Chairman Martinez organized a county-wide expo uniting more than 200 community organizations and businesses in an effort to educate the residents on how to live healthier and better. The free event drew approximately 3,000 residents who received free health



screenings including HIV, hepatitis, diabetes, skin cancer, vision, cholesterol, blood pressure, etc. In addition, participants received information on how to better prepare for the hurricane season with free information on shutters, home mitigation, meals ready to eat, and pet safety.

Educational & Wellness Event

Chairman Martinez celebrated Father's Day by ensuring that men maintain a healthy lifestyle. "The Father's Day Wellness Event" united local insurance companies, health organizations, and other organizations to provide free health screenings and education to all men on issues of importance to their health. Approximately 50 organizations participated in the event held in the lobby of Stephen P. Clark Center.

Domestic Violence Prevention Month

Domestic violence is a recurring situation in the lives of thousands of residents on a daily basis. During the month of October special emphasis is placed on how to help victims of and to put an end to domestic violence. Chairman Martinez joined these efforts by organizing the "Domestic Violence Prevention Event," giving County employees and the community an opportunity to receive vital information on County services for victims of domestic violence and information on how to prevent it. Attendees also donated their old digital cell phones to the Dial-a-Life program to be used by victims of domestic violence. These phones are reprogrammed by ETSD to only dial 911 and receive no incoming calls.

Post Hurricane Katrina Relief Effort

In response to the urgent need for assistance in Mississippi following the path of Hurricane Katrina, Chairman Martinez and the Board of County Commissioners organized a food drive and fundraiser among all County Departments. This event facilitated the donation of non-perishable food items and funds by County employees to those impacted in the Gulf coast states. The event collected approximately three tons of non-perishable food items and raised approximately \$220,000 in donated annual leave time by Miami-Dade County employees.

Back to School Event

At the beginning of each school year, parents ensure that their children have adequate supplies, books, and uniforms. Chairman Martinez saw the need for parents to also prepare their children intellectually and health-wise for a positive start for the new school year. The Chairman in conjunction with members of the Board, several local organizations including the Miami-Dade Public Schools, after-school programs, municipalities, and universities provided parents with information on attention deficit disorders, vaccinations, internet safety, child identification and fingerprints, reading comprehension, etc. The event was held in the lobby of the Stephen P. Clark Center allowing working parents in the Downtown Miami area to attend.

Delivering Excellence

As you can see, the last two years have been busy and fruitful ones. I have been honored to serve as the Chairman of the Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners and look forward to continuing my service to the citizens of this county as District 11 Commissioner.

