



Natacha Seijas

District 13



Natacha Seijas was elected to the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners in 1993 becoming the first Hispanic woman to sit on the County Commission. She represents District 13 which includes Hialeah, Miami Lakes, Palm Springs North, Country Club and areas of unincorporated Miami-Dade. She was most recently re-elected on August 31, 2004. She served previously on the Hialeah City Council from 1987 to 1993.

Commissioner Seijas currently serves as Chairperson of the Governmental Operations and Environment Committee. The committee oversees the delivery of essential county services. Among the departments reporting to the committee are the Water and Sewer Department, Public Works, and the Department of Solid Waste. Policy issues relating to the environment and County growth and development are also considered by this committee.

In past years, Commissioner Seijas has chaired the Infrastructure and Land Use Committee, and the Construction Development and Utilities Committee. During her tenure on those committees, the County stabilized the long-term finances of the Solid Waste Department and introduced the automated "one-armed" service trucks. The Water and Sewer Department also upgraded the entire sewer system, completed the cross-bay pipeline, and is now exploring alternative water supplies to meet the future needs of this community.

An outspoken advocate for water and air quality, in 2005 Commissioner Seijas was named to the National Association of Counties' Environment, Energy and Land Use Steering Committee. As a member of this national body, she shares responsibility for developing and reviewing the organization's legislative policies and positions.

In 2006, the County Commission adopted her resolution supporting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Watersense Program. The Watersense program educates American consumers about products that save money and maintain high environmental standards without compromising performance.

Commissioner Seijas recently established the Climate Change Advisory Task Force. The advisory board is responsible for developing a series of recommendations to ensure that Miami-Dade County, a coastal community, is prepared to respond to the possibility of sea-level rise and other consequences of global warming.

She also introduced legislation directing the County to join the Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX), a market-based organization committed to achieving the reduction of carbon emissions. Commissioner Seijas is confident that, as a local government member of the CCX, the County will achieve greenhouse gas reductions through innovative solutions and strong commitment to energy conservation.

She has been appointed to the Florida Association of Counties. The association represents counties year-round on a host of issues from growth management to environmental regulation before the Florida Legislature, the Governor and Cabinet, various state agencies, and commissions.

In January 2006, Commissioner Seijas was appointed Chairperson of the Jay Malina International Trade Consortium, which is the official county agency responsible for developing and promoting two-way international trade through the Port of Miami and Miami International Airport. She was reappointed to the consortium in January 2008. [Chairperson Bruno Barreiro reappointed the Commissioner to the Consortium in November 2007.]

Since 1999, she has been the Board of County Commissioners' representative on the Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition. Most recently, she was named to the President's Board of Advisors for St. Thomas University.

In 2003, the commissioner was appointed to the Children's Trust by the Board of County Commissioners, where she served until January 2005. She is also a past Chair of the South Florida Regional Planning Council and past Convening Chair of the Women's Hemispheric Conference.

Among her most significant legislative accomplishments is the passage of the Living Wage Ordinance. Employees of Miami-Dade County and those employed by the county's service contractors must be paid a wage sufficient to support a family above the poverty level. Thousands of janitors, landscapers, transportation workers and their families have benefited from this progressive and socially responsible legislation. In 2007, the Commissioner sponsored an ordinance amending the Code of Miami-Dade County to add in-warehouse cargo handling at Miami-Dade County Aviation Department facilities to the Living Wage Ordinance.

One of her greatest achievements came in 1997 when she created the stroller-parking ordinance. This law requires that parking lots with more than 100 spaces provide front row parking for parents with children under 3-years-old. Parents may purchase parking permits to use these spaces for a small fee which goes directly to a fund that helps agencies serving neglected children.

The Commissioner's work earned her the recognition of the Good Housekeeping Magazine as she was awarded the Good Housekeeping Award for Women in Government in 1998. Commissioner Seijas was one of 10 women to receive this prestigious recognition and her profile appeared in the July 1998 issue of the magazine.

In January of 1999, she sponsored the Domestic Violence Leave Ordinance, the first of its kind in the nation, which requires employers to provide leave time to those employees who are victims of domestic violence. She has also been recognized for her initiative in developing assistance programs for the victims of violence as she led efforts in Tallahassee to establish statewide procedures for reporting and responding to incidents of elderly abuse. Commissioner Seijas has also created informative brochures to increase public awareness of the crimes against the elderly and disabled adults, and to promote those agencies and services that are available to them.

State of Florida Department of Elder Affairs

Incredible Partner Award, 2000

South Florida Council of the AFL-CIO

1998 Outstanding Commissioner of Miami-Dade County

The Good Housekeeping Award

Women in Government, 1998

Congressional Record Recognition

Women's International Month, March 1997

The Human and Labor Rights Institute

Jean Paul Genie International Award, 1997

National Association of Cuban American Women

Distinguished Service, 1993 and Elena Mederos Award, 1996

Women's History Month Coalition

Women of Impact Merit Award, 1996

American Red Cross

Clara Barton Founders Club Award, 1996

Commissioner Seijas was born in Havana, Cuba and came to the United States in the late 1950's. She has three children and three grandchildren and one great grandchild. Professionally, she is vice president of the YMCA of Greater Miami.