MEMORANDUM

ED&HS
Agenda Item No. 2(F)

TO:	Honorable Chairperson Barbara Carey-Shuler, Ed.D. and Members, Board of County Commissioners	**DATE:**	December 10, 2003
FROM:	Robert A. Ginsburg County Attorney	**SUBJECT:**	Resolution directing County Manager to conduct a feasibility study regarding importation of Canadian prescription drugs

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Commissioner Katy Sorenson, Commissioner Jimmy L. Morales, Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle, and Commissioner Rebeca Sosa.

Robert A. Ginsburg
County Attorney

RAG/bw

MEMORANDUM
(Revised)

TO: Hon. Chairperson Barbara Carey-Shuler, Ed.D. and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: January 20, 2004

FROM: Robert A. Ginsburg
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No.

Please note any items checked.

✓ **"4-Day Rule" ("3-Day Rule" for committees) applicable if raised**

_____ **6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing**

_____ **4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing**

_____ **Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget**

_____ **Budget required**

_____ **Statement of fiscal impact required**

_____ **Bid waiver requiring County Manager's written recommendation**

_____ **Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Manager's report for public hearing**

_____ **Housekeeping item (no policy decision required)**

_____ **No committee review**

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No.
1-20-04

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COUNTY MANAGER, THROUGH THE OFFICE OF COUNTYWIDE HEALTHCARE PLANNING, TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY REGARDING THE IMPORTATION OF CANADIAN PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES AND SENIOR CITIZENS

WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County currently assists its employees in covering the cost of prescription drugs through its group healthcare plans; and

WHEREAS, the combined expenditures between the County and its employees on prescription drugs totals approximately $27 million annually; and

WHEREAS, over 182,000 senior citizens in Miami-Dade County over the age of 65 have a household income under 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that one out of every five senior citizens takes at least five prescription medications a day; and

WHEREAS, expenditures for prescription drugs are increasing at a faster rate than any other component in healthcare, thereby making the cost for seniors more expensive every year; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that prescription drug costs in Canada are substantially lower (30-80 percent) than in the United States, and that such drugs are safe and manufactured in full compliance with U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations; and

WHEREAS, states such as Illinois have estimated a total savings of up to $90 million to be gained by re-importation of prescription drugs from Canada; and

WHEREAS, this Board created the Office of Countywide Healthcare Planning to implement programs that improve access to healthcare for all residents of Miami-Dade County; and

WHEREAS, a study should be conducted by the Office of Countywide Healthcare to determine the feasibility of "carving out" prescription drugs from existing County health plans, and instead, offering a voluntary prescription drug option through the importation from Canadian pharmaceutical companies to generate savings to the County and its employees; and

WHEREAS, the savings generated from use of a Canadian prescription drug plan for County employees could be used to subsidize the costs of prescription drugs for Miami-Dade County's low-income senior citizens; and

WHEREAS, the importation of pharmaceuticals from Canada into the United States is currently prohibited unless authorized by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and the Commissioner of Customs,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that:

Section 1. This Board hereby directs the County Manager, through the Office of Countywide Healthcare Planning, to conduct a feasibility study to 1) determine the cost savings to the County and its employees from a voluntary Canadian prescription drug plan, and 2) in consultation with the County Attorney's Office to identify any potential liability issues associated with this program, and 3) create a program using the cost savings, to assist low-income seniors pay for their prescription drugs. The Office of Countywide Healthcare Planning and the County Attorney's Office are directed to report their findings to the Board of County Commissioners within sixty (60) days.

Section 2. This Board hereby urges the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and the FDA to support the importation policy for Canadian prescription drugs that would allow the importation of prescription drugs from Canada.

Section 3. The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs is directed to include this request in its 2004 Federal Legislative Package.

The foregoing resolution was sponsored by Commissioner Katy Sorenson, Commissioner Jimmy L. Morales, Commissioner Dorrin D. Rolle, and Commissioner Rebeca Sosa and offered by Commissioner , who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler, Chairperson
Katy Sorenson, Vice-Chairperson

Bruno A. Barreiro	Jose "Pepe" Diaz
Betty T. Ferguson	Sally A. Heyman
Joe A. Martinez	Jimmy L. Morales
Dennis C. Moss	Dorrin D. Rolle
Natacha Seijas	Rebeca Sosa
Sen. Javier D. Souto	

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 20th day of January, 2004. This resolution shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

By:_____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency. ES/RAG

Eugene Shy, Jr.