

## MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(21)

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**TO:** Honorable Chairman Joe A. Martinez  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

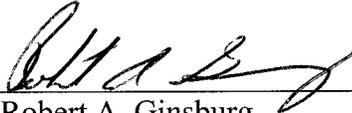
**DATE:** April 5, 2005

**FROM:** Robert A. Ginsburg  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Resolution urging Florida  
Legislature to establish an  
ad valorem tax credit to  
assist homeowners with  
expense incurred to retrofit  
existing security bars

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The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Senator Javier D. Souto.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert A. Ginsburg  
County Attorney

RAG/bw



# MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Chairman Joe A. Martinez  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** April 5, 2005

**FROM:**   
Robert A. Ginsburg  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item No. 11(A)(21)

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. 11(A)(21)  
4-5-05

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO ESTABLISH AN AD VALOREM TAX CREDIT TO ASSIST HOMEOWNERS WITH THE EXPENSE INCURRED TO RETROFIT EXISTING SECURITY BARS WITH QUICK RELEASE DEVICES TO ALLOW OCCUPANTS TO ESCAPE FROM A FIRE AND FACILITATE RESCUE ATTEMPTS BY FIREFIGHTERS

**WHEREAS**, thousands of Florida homeowners have installed security bars on windows and doors in an effort to stop intruders from entering; and

**WHEREAS**, too often these devices are installed without consideration of fire safety; and

**WHEREAS**, although security bars on windows and locked doors may help keep families safe from intruders, they can also trap them in a deadly fire and impede firefighters' rescue attempts; and

**WHEREAS**, the bars designed for protection can also prevent escape from the toxic fumes of smoke and the heat of fire; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the United States Fire Administration, more than 4,000 Americans die each year in fires, and approximately 25,000 are injured; and

**WHEREAS**, windows and doors with permanently fixed security bars can be retrofitted with quick release devices to allow them to be opened immediately in an emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, any room used for sleeping must have safety-release levers, which allow the security bars to push away from the wall when the lever is pulled; and

**WHEREAS**, the quick release devices should be easy to operate without the use of a key, detailed knowledge or great physical effort; and

**WHEREAS**, increasing a home's security from criminals does not have to mean decreasing a family member's ability to escape from a fire; and

**WHEREAS**, serious incidents have occurred where children and elderly residents have been trapped in their homes and died in fires because the security bars were permanently fixed and did not have quick release devices; and

**WHEREAS**, providing homeowners with a credit against their ad valorem taxes to cover the expense of retrofitting existing security bars on bedroom windows and entry doors with quick release devices advances the public policy of publicizing the serious life safety threat resulting from death traps that exists in thousands of homes throughout Florida; the public policy encouraging people to bring their homes into fire safety compliance quickly by assisting them with a limited time tax credit that helps them bear the financial costs for retrofitting their homes; and the public policy of allowing retailers to work with local government to educate the public on how to improve life safety at little or no cost to the homeowner,

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

Section 1. This Board urges the Florida Legislature to establish an ad valorem tax credit of up to \$1,000 amortized at a rate of \$100 per annum over a ten-year period to assist homeowners with the actual expense incurred to retrofit existing security bars on windows and entry doors with quick release devices, which allow the occupants to escape from a fire and also facilitate the firefighters' rescue.

Section 2. The Clerk of the Board is directed to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Chair and members of the Miami-Dade County State Legislative Delegation.

Section 3. The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs is directed to include this issue in the County's 2005 State Legislative package.

The foregoing resolution was sponsored by Senator Javier D. Souto 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:

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Joe A. Martinez, Chairman     |                          |
| Dennis C. Moss, Vice-Chairman |                          |
| Bruno A. Barreiro             | Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler |
| Jose "Pepe" Diaz              | Carlos A. Gimenez        |
| Sally A. Heyman               | Barbara J. Jordan        |
| Dorin D. Rolle                | Natacha Seijas           |
| Katy Sorenson                 | Rebeca Sosa              |
| Sen. Javier D. Souto          |                          |

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 5<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2005. 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.

James K. Kracht

