MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(7)

TO:	Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime and Members, Board of County Commissioners	**DATE:**	October 20, 2015
FROM:	Abigail Price-Williams County Attorney	**SUBJECT:**	Resolution urging the Florida Legislature to allocate funding for Miami-Dade County's Environmentally Endangered Lands Program for conservation land acquisition and management pursuant to the Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative, Florida Constitutional Amendment 1; urging the Florida Association of Counties to identify this issue as one of its priorities for the 2016 legislative session

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Rebeca Sosa.

Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

APW/smm

MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: October 20, 2015

FROM: Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 11(A)(7)

Please note any items checked.

_____ **"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**

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

✓ **No committee review**

_____ **Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous _____) to approve**

_____ **Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required**

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(7)
10-20-15

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO ALLOCATE FUNDING FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S ENVIRONMENTALLY ENDANGERED LANDS PROGRAM FOR CONSERVATION LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT PURSUANT TO THE FLORIDA WATER AND LAND CONSERVATION INITIATIVE, FLORIDA CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 1; URGING THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES TO IDENTIFY THIS ISSUE AS ONE OF ITS PRIORITIES FOR THE 2016 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, on November 4, 2014, 75.64 percent of Florida voters overwhelmingly approved Florida Constitutional Amendment 1, the Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative, which authorizes no less than 33 percent of net revenues collected from the existing excise tax on real estate documents (the "stamp tax") to be used to acquire, restore, and improve land and water areas throughout Florida; and

WHEREAS, the revenues collected pursuant to Amendment 1 may be used to help finance the acquisition and management of conservation land in Miami-Dade County; and

WHEREAS, as the most populous county in Florida and with numerous high value properties within its borders, Miami-Dade County generates a significant share of Florida's total stamp tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, stamp tax revenues have historically been used to provide state funding for the purchase of environmentally significant Florida lands; and

WHEREAS, Florida is known for its beautiful rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands, forests, wildlife habitat, and beaches and shores, and these natural assets are central to Florida residents' quality of life and economic vitality; and

WHEREAS, outdoor recreation and tourism is one of Florida's most significant industries, employing one out of every nine residents, drawing 90 million people annually to this state, and contributing $71 billion to Florida's economy in 2012; and

WHEREAS, in 1990 the citizens of Miami-Dade County voted to create the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program ("EEL Program"), and approved a two-year property tax to fund the EEL Program's acquisition, protection, and maintenance of environmentally endangered lands; and

WHEREAS, the EEL Program and its purchasing partners have brought more than 20,700 acres of environmentally endangered lands into public ownership within the County and manage 2,800 additional acres of natural lands within Miami-Dade County parks; and

WHEREAS, these environmentally endangered lands contain many treasured natural resources that contribute greatly to the recreational opportunities and quality of life enjoyed by Florida residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County's environmentally endangered lands provide many critical public services to its residents and visitors, such as protecting against saltwater intrusion, reducing stormwater runoff from polluting surface waters and Biscayne Bay, providing aquifer recharge and wellfield protection, providing carbon sequestration, protecting numerous species, and habitat conservation; and

WHEREAS, the County has focused its efforts on environmentally endangered land acquisition in areas such as the Biscayne Coastal Wetlands, the Oleta River Corridor, and the South Dade Wetlands; and

WHEREAS, with support from Florida's Governors and Legislatures from 1990 through 2008, two state programs, Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever, received approximately $300 million in state funding each year; and

WHEREAS, the EEL Program, has benefited directly from state land conservation management and restoration programs funded through Preservation 2000, Florida Forever, and the Florida Communities Trust by receiving over $14.5 million in grants from these programs; and

WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County, primarily through the EEL Program, has worked in partnership with the State of Florida to acquire almost 12,000 acres of conservation land titled to the State; and

WHEREAS, the EEL Program has acquired another 12,000 acres of conservation lands titled to the County; and

WHEREAS, the EEL Program spends over $3 million annually on the management of these state and county-owned conservation lands; and

WHEREAS, while the Amendment 1 portion of the stamp tax revenue totaled $740 million, the state's fiscal year 2015-2016 budget has allocated just $15 million for Florida Forever funding, $88.7 million for land acquisition, and $100 million for land restoration, which together account for less than 30 percent of the total available Amendment 1 funds; and

WHEREAS, during the 2015 state legislative session, this Board passed Resolution No. R-173-15, which urged the state legislature to allocate funding for Miami-Dade County's EEL Program; and

WHEREAS, acquisition, management, and restoration of conservation lands in Miami-Dade County, as well as other counties in Florida, requires a sustainable, dedicated source of funding,

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

Section 1. Urges the Florida Legislature to allocate funding for county environmentally endangered lands programs for conservation land acquisition and management pursuant to the Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative, Florida Constitutional Amendment 1.

Section 2. Urges the Florida Association of Counties to include securing funding for county environmentally endangered lands programs for conservation land acquisition and management pursuant to the Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative, Florida Constitutional Amendment 1, as one of its critical priorities for the 2016 legislative session.

Section 3. Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Governor, Senate President, House Speaker, the Chair and Members of the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation, and the Executive Director of the Florida Association of Counties.

Section 4. Directs the County's state lobbyists to advocate for the issues raised in Section 1 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to amend the 2016 State Legislative Package to include this item.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Rebeca Sosa. It was 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:

Jean Monestime, Chairman
Esteban L. Bovo, Jr., Vice Chairman

Bruno A. Barreiro	Daniella Levine Cava
Jose "Pepe" Diaz	Audrey M. Edmonson
Sally A. Heyman	Barbara J. Jordan
Dennis C. Moss	Rebeca Sosa
Sen. Javier D. Souto	Xavier L. Suarez
Juan C. Zapata	

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 20th day of October, 2015. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this Resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the 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. JMM FOR

Javier Zapata