

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(22)

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

DATE: February 2, 2016

FROM: Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution urging the Florida Legislature to enact legislation banning the sale of Argentine black and white tegus in Florida; urging the Florida Legislature and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to explore additional measures to address the presence of these lizards in the Everglades

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

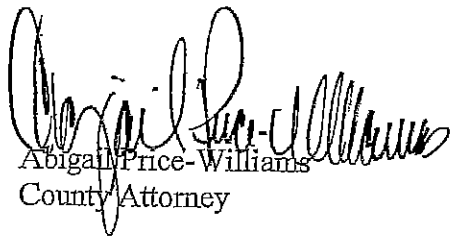


MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

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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
- Statement of social equity 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)(22)
2-2-16

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO ENACT LEGISLATION BANNING THE SALE OF ARGENTINE BLACK AND WHITE TEGUS IN FLORIDA; URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE AND THE FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION TO EXPLORE ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE PRESENCE OF THESE LIZARDS IN THE EVERGLADES

WHEREAS, as part of an increasingly popular international pet trade market, many exotic animals have been removed from their native habitats and placed in areas where they may disrupt the surrounding ecological environment; and

WHEREAS, the most recent of these invasive species to affect Florida is the Argentine black and white tegu, a large omnivorous species of lizard native to South America which was first spotted in the wild near a Florida City trailer park in 2008; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, when biologists first began trapping the lizards in South Florida, they captured just 13 tegus, whereas in 2015 that number is fast approaching 500; and

WHEREAS, such a rapid rise has many wildlife biologists questioning whether the Argentine black and white tegu could be the next Burmese python, a large invasive species of snake which in recent years has established a large breeding population in the Everglades National Park, disrupting the delicate balance of the park's food chain; and

WHEREAS, unlike Burmese pythons, however, Argentine black and white tegus can survive in colder weather than South Florida's tropical climate, making them capable of extending their territory to other regions; and

WHEREAS, indeed, in the last several years Argentine black and white tegus have spread into the Florida Everglades, west to Collier County and then north to Hillsborough County; and

WHEREAS, the same conditions that allow the vast diversity of wildlife to thrive in the Everglades also enable the survival of invasive exotic species such as the Argentine black and white tegu that can disrupt the delicate balance of the Everglades' unique ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, these invaders can harm native species, some of which are threatened and endangered, and add economic burdens to private landowners and public land managers; and

WHEREAS, Argentine black and white tegus are still readily available in pet stores, and trapping and selling them is still legal in Florida; and

WHEREAS, this Board would like to urge the Florida Legislature to ban the sale of Argentine black and white tegus in Florida, and would also like to urge the Florida Legislature and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to explore additional measures to address the presence of these lizards in the Everglades,

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 enact legislation banning the sale of Argentine black and white tegus in Florida.

Section 2. Urges the Florida Legislature and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to explore additional measures to address the presence of Argentine black and white tegus in the Everglades.

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 Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Section 4. Directs the County's state lobbyists to advocate for the legislation set forth in Section 1 above and for the action set forth in Section 2 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to amend the 2016 State Legislative Package to include this item and to include this item in the 2017 State Legislative Package when it is presented to the Board.

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 2nd day of February, 2016. 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.

MSM

Michael J. Mastrucci

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