

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(9)

TO: Honorable Chairman Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: December 19, 2017

FROM: Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution urging the United States Congress to enact S. 1595 or H.R. 3329, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, or similar legislation; urging the United States Department of Homeland Security and other applicable federal agencies to maximize their efforts, in cooperation with the Miami-Dade Police Department, to reduce and eliminate the threat of criminal and other illicit activity in Miami-Dade County used to raise or launder funds for, or funnel funds to, Hizballah or its related entities, with a focus on Miami-Dade County's airports and seaport; directing the County Mayor to confer and collaborate with state and federal law enforcement agencies to address the threat of criminal activity related to Hizballah

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz.


Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

APW/cp



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

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(9)

Veto _____

12-19-17

Override _____

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO ENACT S. 1595 OR H.R. 3329, THE HIZBALLAH INTERNATIONAL FINANCING PREVENTION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2017, OR SIMILAR LEGISLATION; URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND OTHER APPLICABLE FEDERAL AGENCIES TO MAXIMIZE THEIR EFFORTS, IN COOPERATION WITH THE MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT, TO REDUCE AND ELIMINATE THE THREAT OF CRIMINAL AND OTHER ILLICIT ACTIVITY IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY USED TO RAISE OR LAUNDER FUNDS FOR, OR FUNNEL FUNDS TO, HIZBALLAH OR ITS RELATED ENTITIES, WITH A FOCUS ON MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S AIRPORTS AND SEAPORT; DIRECTING THE MAYOR OR THE MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO CONFER AND COLLABORATE WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO ADDRESS THE THREAT OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY RELATED TO HIZBALLAH

WHEREAS, Executive Order 12947 issued by President Bill Clinton on January 23, 1995 listed Hizballah (also known as Hezbollah) as a Specially Designated Terrorist ("SDT") organization; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, the United States Department of State designated Hizballah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO); and

WHEREAS, on October 31, 2001, the United States Department of Treasury designated Hizballah as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist pursuant to Executive Order 13224 issued by President George W. Bush on September 23, 2001; and

WHEREAS, in 2004 and 2006, the Department of Treasury listed Hizballah finance operatives, counterfeiters, and drug dealers in the "Tri-Border area" of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay as Specially Designated Global Terrorists ("SDGT"); and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Hizballah financier Ali Hassan Hammoud was arrested on his way to Beirut after he defrauded the State of Florida and transferred \$5.7 million to Lebanese financial accounts which benefited Hizballah; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, seven individuals were prosecuted in Miami for violating U.S. sanctions and trading with Hizballah's SDGT's in the Tri-Border area; and

WHEREAS, in February 2017, the Department of Treasury designated Venezuela's Vice-President, Tareck el-Aissami, under the Kingpin Act for using Miami-based front companies to launder revenue from drug trafficking in Venezuela for narcotics intended for the United States and Mexico; and

WHEREAS, in May 2017, Dr. Emanuele Ottolenghi, Senior Fellow with the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, testified before the United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues, that there are more than 420 companies operating in the Greater Miami metropolitan area with ties to the Tri-Border area and, potentially, with Hizballah; and

WHEREAS, in June 2017, Ali Issa Chamas, a Lebanese national with Paraguayan citizenship, with reported ties to Hizballah, was extradited to the United States and indicted in Miami for conspiracy to distribute cocaine into the United States; and

WHEREAS, this Board supports measures to disrupt narcotics trafficking and money laundering in Miami-Dade County intended to funnel monies in support of Hizballah, or any other designated terrorist organization, including but not limited to Latin American-based criminal enterprises; and

WHEREAS, this Board supports the investigation and prosecution of those who are exploiting Miami-Dade County's business environment to launder revenues from illicit activities, including terror financing through drug trafficking; and

WHEREAS, United States Representative Edward R. Royce (R – California), introduced H.R. 3329, a bill entitled the "Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017," for consideration during the 115th Congress; and

WHEREAS, United States Senator Marco Rubio (R- Florida), introduced Senate bill S. 1595, a bill entitled the "Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017," for consideration during the 115th Congress; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 3329 or S. 1595, if passed, would amend the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 to impose additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah, including monetary sanctions for persons, including any state sponsors, that knowingly assist, sponsor, or provide significant financial, material, or technological support for Hizballah or its related entities, including so-called political and military "wings;" and

WHEREAS, the additional sanctions against violators would include blocking assets, and denial or revocation of visas for entry into the United States, which would supplement already-existing sanctions in the form of criminal penalties, civil monetary fines, and asset forfeiture for money laundering and other crimes committed to support Hizballah; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 3329 would also require the President of the United States (“the President”) to prepare a report that contains, among other things, an analysis and a description of the steps that the President is taking to disrupt the foreign and domestic supply chain for Hizballah’s acquisition or development of missile production facilities; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 3329 further requires the Secretary of State for the United States to submit to the appropriate congressional committees a strategy to prevent hostile activities undertaken by Iran and disrupt and degrade Hizballah’s illicit networks in the Western Hemisphere; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 3329 further requires that such a strategy must:

(1) identify Department of State priorities for defining United States policy to protect United States interests from Iranian and Hizballah threats in the Western Hemisphere;

(2) provide for cooperation amongst executive branch agencies to ensure that information-sharing, interdictions, arrests, investigations, indictments, sanctions, and designations related to Hizballah individuals or networks in the Western Hemisphere are integrated, coordinated, and publicly communicated by the United States in a manner that supports United States interests; and

(3) describe Iranian and Hizballah activities in the Western Hemisphere, their relationships with transnational criminal organizations in the region, their use of the region’s commodities trade to engage in illicit activities, and their use of Latin American and Caribbean visas to gain admittance into the United States; and

WHEREAS, S. 1595, if passed, would require the President to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of any agency or instrumentality of a foreign state within the United States if the assets were intended to provide significant financial, material or technological support for, goods or services to or in support of, or arms or related material to Hizballah; and

WHEREAS, S. 1595, if passed, would require the President to report to the appropriate congressional committee each foreign financial institution that engages in prohibited activities, including the failure to timely block assets intended to provide significant financial, material or technological support for, goods or services to or in support of, or arms or related material to Hizballah; and

WHEREAS, S. 1595, if passed, would require the President to report to the appropriate congressional committee any racketeering activities and illicit tobacco trafficking that Hizballah and its agents and affiliates have engaged in; and

WHEREAS, S. 1595, if passed, would further require the President to report to the appropriate congressional committee a list of jurisdictions outside of Lebanon that expressly consent to, or knowingly allow, Hizballah the use of their territory to carry out terrorist activities, including training, financing, and recruitment; and

WHEREAS, S. 1595, if passed, would also require the President to report to the appropriate congressional committee the estimated net worth of those persons identified as Senior Hizballah Members; and

WHEREAS, this Board is committed to supporting legislation designed to weaken and eventually eradicate Hizballah and its related entities,

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

Section 1. Urges the United States Congress to pass S. 1595 or H.R. 3329, the “Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017,” or similar legislation.

Section 2. Urges the United States Department of Homeland Security and other applicable federal agencies to maximize their efforts, in cooperation with the Miami-Dade Police Department, to reduce and eliminate the threat of criminal and other illicit activity in Miami-Dade County used to raise or launder funds for, or funnel funds to, Hizballah or its related entities, with a focus on Miami-Dade County’s airports and seaport.

Section 3. Directs the Mayor or the Mayor’s designee to confer and collaborate with law enforcement authorities at both the state and federal levels to address the threat of criminal and other illicit activity in Miami-Dade County used to raise or launder funds for, or funnel funds to, Hizballah or its related entities.

Section 4. Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to United States Senator Marco Rubio, United States Representative Edward R. Royce, the members of the Florida Congressional Delegation and the United States Secretary of Homeland Security.

Section 5. Directs the County’s federal lobbyists to advocate for the legislative action described in sections 1 and 2 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to amend the 2017 Federal Legislative Package to include this item and to include this item in the 2018 Federal Legislative Package when it is presented to the Board.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz. 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:

Esteban L. Bovo, Jr., Chairman	
Audrey M. Edmonson, Vice Chairwoman	
Bruno A. Barreiro	Daniella Levine Cava
Jose "Pepe" Diaz	Sally A. Heyman
Barbara J. Jordan	Joe A. Martinez
Jean Monestime	Dennis C. Moss
Rebeca Sosa	Sen. Javier D. Souto
Xavier L. Suarez	

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 19th day of December, 2017. 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.



David Sherman
David M. Murray