

# MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(28)

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**TO:** Honorable Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

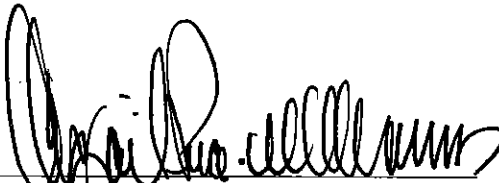
**DATE:** January 23, 2019

**FROM:** Abigail Price-Williams  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Resolution urging the Florida  
Legislature to provide funding  
for the Veterans Treatment Court  
in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit in  
and for Miami-Dade County

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

  
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Abigail Price-Williams  
County Attorney

APW/lmp



# MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

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and Members, Board of County Commissioners

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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 \_\_\_\_, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, or CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c)(2) \_\_\_\_) 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)(28)  
1-23-19

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

RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO  
PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE VETERANS TREATMENT  
COURT IN THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

**WHEREAS**, on May 15, 2012, this Board adopted Ordinance No. 12-37 creating the Military Affairs Board and charging the Military Affairs Board with the responsibility to “[a]dvocate on behalf of military personnel in Miami-Dade County regarding . . . incarceration,” among other things; and

**WHEREAS**, in furtherance of this mission, the Military Affairs Board, working cooperatively with federal and state partners, initiated and undertook efforts to establish a Veterans Treatment Court in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit in and for Miami-Dade County (“Veterans Treatment Court”); and

**WHEREAS**, these federal and state partners included the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Miami Veterans Health Administration; the Eleventh Judicial Circuit; and the South Florida Behavioral Health Network; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2016, the Veterans Treatment Court was established and, through the date of this resolution, has accepted dozens of veterans for disposition of their criminal charges through the program; and

**WHEREAS**, additional funding is necessary so that the Veterans Treatment Court continue to offer services to veterans, including by providing the necessary monitoring to assist in the process of rehabilitation and to make any necessary arrangements for housing veterans in need (either as transitional housing or for in-patient treatment); and

**WHEREAS**, although the Veterans Treatment Court has sought and received funding from partners at all levels of government, including the Florida Legislature, the Veterans Treatment Court remains a program in need of additional resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the Veterans Treatment Court is nonetheless a promising program; and

**WHEREAS**, one of the first graduates of the program, a 35-year-old veteran struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse who was charged with fighting a police officer, described the program as one that “will help a lot of other veterans”; and

**WHEREAS**, that veteran is now an engineering student at Miami-Dade College and remains sober; and

**WHEREAS**, the County has not only invested funding in the Veterans Treatment Court, but has also provided the judicial system with additional tools necessary to ensure the program’s success; and

**WHEREAS**, for example, the Veterans Treatment Court is modeled after similar courts throughout the nation and endeavors to provide specialized services tailored to meet veterans’ unique needs, including veteran-on-veteran mentoring, all with the objective of assisting veterans encountering the criminal justice system with their healthy reintegration into civilian life, reduced likelihood of recidivism, and receipt of proper mental health care; and

**WHEREAS**, the approach to ensuring the success of the Veterans Treatment Court is holistic, embracing action by both the Military Affairs Board and this Board, beginning with Resolution No. R-774-14 which this Board adopted on September 3, 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, Resolution No. R-774-14 resulted in the redesign of the arrest forms used by law enforcement throughout Miami-Dade County to identify veterans at the time of arrest; and

**WHEREAS**, in furtherance of its effort to reach out to and provide assistance to arrested veterans, the County—through the Military Affairs Board and Resolution No. R-773-14, adopted by this Board on September 3, 2014—has taken steps to ensure that veterans, upon their booking into jail, are provided with literature informing them of the benefits available to incarcerated veterans under applicable laws; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to undertaking efforts to ensure that veterans are identified at the time of arrest or booking, the Military Affairs Board ensured that the Veterans Treatment Court was modeled after the most successful programs in the nation by observing the functioning of those programs and engaging in dialogue with those officials who organize and manage the programs; and

**WHEREAS**, through these information exchanges, the Military Affairs Board determined that a mentorship program, designed to work hand-in-hand with the Veterans Treatment Court, was crucial to the Veterans Treatment Court's success and, as such, the Military Affairs Board used its broad network within the military community to recruit, and encourage other entities to recruit, volunteers to serve as veteran mentors; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to federal and local efforts, this Board would like to urge the Florida Legislature to continue its support of the Veterans Treatment Court by appropriating additional state funds to the Miami-Dade County Veterans Treatment Court during the 2019 session,

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

**Section 1.** Urges the Governor and Florida Legislature to provide funding for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit's Veterans Treatment Court.

**Section 2.** 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 Chief Judge of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit.

**Section 3.** Directs the County's state lobbyists to advocate for the funding indicated in Section 1 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to amend the 2019 State Legislative Package to include this item.

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:

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

Q

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 23rd day of January, 2019. 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.

*MAG*

Miguel A. Gonzalez