

Memorandum



Date: March 12, 2018

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

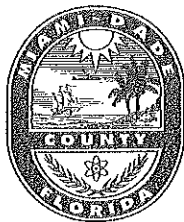
From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor

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Subject: FY 2018-19 Budget Address

Pursuant to Section 2.02(F) of the Miami-Dade County Charter, attached please find my Budget Address for FY 2018-19.

c: Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Clerk of the Courts
Pedro Garcia, Property Appraiser
Abigail Price-Williams, County Attorney
Geri Bonzon-Keenan, First Assistant County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Jennifer Moon, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Cathy Jackson, Interim Commission Auditor
Department Directors



CARLOS A. GIMENEZ

MAYOR
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

March 12, 2018

FY 2018-19 Budget Address

Dear Fellow Residents:

We have already begun the task of developing the FY 2018-19 Proposed Budget. At the beginning of this process each year, it is my responsibility as Mayor to outline my priorities in a budget address to the residents of Miami-Dade County. My highest priorities continue to be managing an efficient and effective government in a financially responsible manner, as we enhance the resilience of our community. We must look to where we want to be in the future and what will be impacting us now and in the coming years as we put together the budget for next year.

Just last year, Hurricane Irma greatly impacted our county. I'm very proud of the response provided by our employees. Thousands of County employees secured their homes and then reported to duty, preparing our community for the storm and then cleaning up the aftermath. Because we properly budgeted reserves, we had the resources we needed to respond quickly -- both before and after the storm. We opened 43 shelters and housed 31,000 evacuees. We distributed 489,000 meals, handled 110,000 calls at our Answer Center, cleared 275,000 tons of debris from our roadways, and collected 4 million cubic tons of debris from our solid waste service area. We were lucky: The storm weakened as it approached, and damage was not as bad as it could have been. In many ways, we were prepared for the storm; but in other ways, Hurricane Irma gave us the opportunity to analyze our response and make certain improvements. As we develop the budget, we will be making sure that we continue to provide reserves, as well as fund enhancements necessary for our emergency response and post-storm recovery activities.

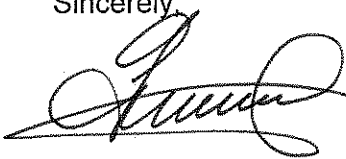
This coming November, a constitutional amendment will be before the voters of Florida, calling for an increase to the homestead exemption provided for the primary homes of property owners. While the economy has improved to the benefit of our residents, I do think that this amendment will pass. We have already begun planning for this eventuality, establishing Homestead Exemption Reserves in the Fire Rescue and Library districts, and in the tax-supported General Fund. Establishing these reserves is not enough. Although they are fully funded in both the Fire Rescue and Library districts, they serve only to postpone the impact of the resulting property tax revenue loss. We have not, as yet, fully funded the reserve in the General Fund. During budget development for FY 2017-18, we identified and froze 1,386 positions, which will be eliminated in the FY 2018-19 Proposed Budget. We will continue this practice of freezing vacant positions and eliminating them in the subsequent budget to avoid as many layoffs as possible. We will not be

able to avoid service reductions, however, and the FY 2018-19 Proposed Budget will reflect the beginning of this scaling back of government. We will focus on those critical core services that are needed to support the resilience of our community.

Last month, the unthinkable happened in our neighboring county and 17 people lost their lives at the hands of a mentally-ill individual who had access to a very powerful firearm. Simply changing gun laws or arming teachers does not solve the problems that have evolved over time in our society. We need to make sure there are secure places for our children with supportive caregivers who can not only provide safe places for our kids to learn and play, but can also identify when there is an individual who needs special services. Those services must be available to help people who are having difficulty coping or suffer from mental illness. Our police need to be properly trained and resourced so that they are prepared to react when a crisis occurs. All levels of government need to be accountable and work together if we are to move society in a different direction. I do not want my grandchildren to live in fear. Changes have to be made so that what happened in Parkland never happens again.

Each of these examples of resilience – being ready for adverse weather, preparing for a financial storm of sorts, and promoting a supportive society – while seemingly divergent goals, are actually the basis for a sustainable community into the future. I continue to work hard for you, the residents of Miami-Dade County, and look forward to a vibrant future for us all. As we prepare the FY 2018-19 Proposed Budget, these elements will be the basis for our resource allocation decisions. I look forward to your input and your support in the coming months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name of the speaker, written in a cursive style.