

THANK YOU!

IT'S A PLEASURE TO JOIN YOU TO CELEBRATE THE 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADA AND TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS LANDMARK LEGISLATION THAT PROTECTS ACCESS AND OPENNESS FOR ALL, REGARDLESS OF THEIR ABILITIES.

WHEN THEN PRESIDENT GEORGE H.W. BUSH SIGNED THE A.D.A. INTO LAW...

HE MENTIONED HOW "EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD WITH A DISABILITY CAN NOW PASS THROUGH ONCE-CLOSED DOORS INTO A BRIGHT NEW ERA OF EQUALITY, INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM."

AND TODAY, LOOKING AT THE WORK THAT HARRY AND SHAKE-A-LEG ARE DOING...

AND WHEN WE LOOK AROUND AT THE GAINS MADE TOWARD INCLUSION, ALL THESE YEARS LATER, THIS IS THE SPIRIT THAT WE ARE ALL HERE TO HONOR AND CELEBRATE.

IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA, 20%, THAT'S 1 IN EVERY 5 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES RESIDE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR POPULATION...

AND AS SUCH, WE DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO ENSURE THEY ARE FULLY PARTICIPATING IN EVERYTHING OUR COMMUNITY HAS TO OFFER.

WE IN MIAMI-DADE HAVE BEEN LEADERS IN ADOPTING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE A.D.A., AND ENSURING THAT WE ARE ACCESSIBLE AND OPEN TO ALL.

THROUGHOUT OUR ORGANIZATION, WE ARE AWARE AND FOLLOW THIS SPIRIT OF INCLUSION.

IN FACT, WE ARE ONE OF A FEW MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH AN A.D.A. COORDINATOR IN EACH ONE OF OUR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS.

THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING SURE THAT ALL OUR PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE.

WE ALSO HAVE A VIBRANT AND ACTIVE COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES THAT SERVES AS THE VOICE OF THE LOCAL DISABLED COMMUNITY...

THEY'RE OUR PARTNERS AND ADVISERS FOR WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY.

OUR SPIRIT OF INCLUSION ALSO GOES BEYOND GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS. IT EXTENDS TO THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE.

FROM TRANSIT TO PUBLIC WORKS, WE MAKE SURE THAT OUR SERVICES EXTEND TO PERSONS OF ALL ABILITIES.

OUR PARKS ARE A GREAT EXAMPLE OF THIS.

FROM SPORTS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES TO THE LEISURE ACCESS CENTER AT A.D. BARNES PARK AND THE PARALYMPICS SPORTS CLUB...

OUR PARKS OFFER ACTIVITIES FOR ALL OUR RESIDENTS.

AND JUST THIS PAST MARCH WE BROKE GROUND ON NEW A.D.A. ENHANCEMENTS THAT WILL BETTER CONNECT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AT HAULOVER BEACH PARK...

ALLOWING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND ALL VISITORS TO ENJOY ONE OF THE BEST BEACHES IN OUR COMMUNITY.

THE SPIRIT OF INCLUSION THAT WE CELEBRATE TODAY IS ALIVE AND WELL IN OUR COMMUNITY.

AND I AM HAPPY TO JOIN ALL OF YOU AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CAN FULFILL THEIR GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR INDEPENDENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS!