

GOOD MORNING EVERYONE!

SHELDON, LARRY, MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DEAR FRIENDS...

IT'S A PLEASURE TO JOIN YOU FOR YOUR DIRECTOR'S RETREAT AND TO SHARE SOME OF MY THOUGHTS ON THE ROLE OF THE BEACON COUNCIL AND ALL OF YOU IN OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

LAST OCTOBER I SPOKE AT YOUR ANNUAL MEETING AND I WANT US TO THINK ABOUT HOW MUCH HAS CHANGED SINCE THEN.

SHELDON HAD JUST TAKEN OVER AS PRESIDENT...

I THINK LARRY HAD BEEN ON THE JOB FOR A HANDFUL OF DAYS...

AND THE BEACON COUNCIL HAD BEEN THROUGH SOME VERY IMPORTANT CHANGES.

I MENTIONED HOW MANAGING THESE CHANGES SUCCESSFULLY WAS CRUCIAL IN HELPING THE ORGANIZATION MOVE FORWARD, AND TO COME OUT EVEN STRONGER THAN BEFORE.

I CHALLENGED THE BEACON COUNCIL TO JOIN US IN FINDING NEW AND INNOVATIVE WAYS TO WORK ON OUR SHARED PRIORITY:

TO ATTRACT, RETAIN, EXPAND, AND CREATE A VARIETY OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THAT WOULD GROW THE JOB BASE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

TODAY, I CAN SAY THAT THE BEACON COUNCIL HAS RISEN TO THE CHALLENGE...

YOU HAVE EMERGED AS A STRONGER PARTNER, THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND OUR PRIVATE SECTOR BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

THE RESULT IS THAT OUR MIAMI-DADE ECONOMY IS ROBUST AND GROWING.

JUST LOOK AT OUR JOB NUMBERS.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY LED THE STATE'S 22 METRO AREAS IN JOB CREATION.

THIS COMES FROM ALL OF US JOINING FORCES TO GROW THE ECONOMIC BASE, AND WITH THE BEACON COUNCIL DIVERSIFYING ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

TRADITIONALLY, THE BEACON COUNCIL FOCUSED ON ATTRACTING AND LANDING LARGE CORPORATIONS.

THIS IS STILL IMPORTANT.

RYDER SYSTEMS, FOR EXAMPLE, RECENTLY ANNOUNCED IT WOULD STAY IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

AND AMAZON IS BUILDING A NEW PACKAGE HANDLING FACILITY HERE IN THE COUNTY.

BUT WE CANNOT NEGLECT THE ENORMOUS JOB GENERATING POTENTIAL THAT SMALL BUSINESSES PROVIDE TO OUR ECONOMY.

I CHALLENGED YOU TO SEEK OUT THESE BUSINESSES AND THE BEACON COUNCIL ACCELERATED THE "LOCAL BUSINESS, LOCAL JOBS" PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY AND SOLVE OBSTACLES TO COMMERCIAL GROWTH.

SINCE OCTOBER OF LAST YEAR, OVER 100 VISITS TOOK PLACE TO COMPANIES THAT EMPLOY OVER 8,260 PEOPLE, WITH 32 COMPANIES IN THE ENTERPRISE ZONE AND 18 IN TARGETED URBAN AREAS.

THIS IS MORE THAN SMALL BUSINESS OUTREACH;
IT'S HELPING THESE BUSINESSES GET AHEAD AND
CREATE MORE JOBS.

I'VE SAID THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY NEEDS TO BE
A HOME FOR CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS, THE
COMMUNITY WHERE THE NEXT MICROSOFT AND
IBM WILL BE CREATED.

AND NOW, JUST LOOK AT THE EXPLOSION OF TECH
START-UP ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY,
ESPECIALLY IN WYNWOOD AND OUR URBAN CORE.

VENTURE HIVE, A COMPANY THAT MY
ADMINISTRATION INVESTED IN EARLY ON, IS NOW
HOME TO THE FIRST MICROSOFT INNOVATION
CENTER IN NORTH AMERICA.

LAST MAY, THE EMERGE AMERICAS CONFERENCE
WAS A SUCCESS IN BRINGING OVER 6,000 TECH
PROFESSIONALS FROM THROUGHOUT THE
HEMISPHERE, PLACING MIAMI ON THE GLOBAL
TECH MAP.

NEXT YEAR'S CONFERENCE PROMISES TO BE EVEN
BIGGER.

AND MY ADMINISTRATION IS WORKING ON AN OPEN DATA PLATFORM WHERE GOVERNMENT AND TECHNOLOGY MERGE, AND WHERE CITIZENS HAVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND THE ABILITY TO USE IT TO MAKE GOVERNMENT MORE EFFICIENT.

WE'VE MADE SURE TO CONTINUE OUR INVESTMENT IN OUR AIRPORT, BECAUSE MIA IS OUR TOP ECONOMIC ENGINE.

MIA HAS ADDED OVER 20 NEW AIRLINES AND NOW CONNECTS OUR COMMUNITY TO OVER 150 DESTINATIONS, INCLUDING THE ONLY DIRECT FLIGHT FROM THE SOUTHEAST UNITED STATES TO DOHA, QATAR.

THE BEACON COUNCIL HELPED LAN CARGO IN THEIR PLANS TO BUILD A NEW HANGAR AT MIA, A \$20 MILLION INVESTMENT BY THAT COMPANY.

AND MIAMI-DADE IS ALSO THE HOME OF BOEING FLIGHT SERVICES, THEIR LARGEST TRAINING CAMPUS IN THE WORLD, WHERE OVER 4,500 STUDENTS ARE TRAINING TO BECOME THE PILOTS AND AVIATION TECHNICIANS OF TOMORROW.

THESE AND OTHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE JOBS OF TOMORROW SHOW THAT WE ARE ALL FOCUSED ON PROVIDING GREATER ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

WE ARE PUTTING AN END TO THE BRAIN DRAIN IN OUR COMMUNITY.

MIAMI-DADE IS A COLLEGE TOWN.

WE RANK AMONG THE TOP TEN AREAS IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION.

THE TALENT IS ALREADY HERE, WE JUST NEED TO MAKE SURE IT STAYS HERE.

THIS IS WHY MY ADMINISTRATION IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AS WELL AS ALL OF OUR LOCAL UNIVERSITIES.

WE HAVE CREATED INTERNSHIPS IN COUNTY OFFICES TO BETTER PREPARE STUDENTS TO ENTER OUR WORK-FORCE.

AND I HAVE CHALLENGED THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO REPLICATE THESE INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN THEIR OWN BUSINESSES.

THROUGH THE ACADEMIC LEADERS COUNCIL THAT BRINGS TOGETHER THE PRESIDENTS OF OUR UNIVERSITIES AND OTHERS IN ACADEMIA...

I KNOW YOU ARE ALL WORKING TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF CORPORATE MIAMI BY CREATING A PIPELINE OF QUALIFIED GRADUATES THAT KEEPS PACE WITH BUSINESS NEEDS.

THIS IS THE TYPE OF INNOVATIVE THINKING AND COOPERATION THAT WE ALL NEED TO ENGAGE IN.

AND STILL, THIS IS NOT ENOUGH...

WITH ALL WE HAVE DONE, I AM NEVER SATISFIED.

WE CAN NEVER BE COMPLACENT BECAUSE OUR COUNTY AND OUR PEOPLE DESERVE THE BEST.

SO HERE IS MY NEXT CHALLENGE TO THE BEACON COUNCIL:

WE NEED YOU TO CONTINUE YOUR STRONG RECRUITMENT OF COMPANIES TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, AND TO FIND INNOVATE WAYS TO GROW NEW BUSINESSES IN MIAMI-DADE.

WE NEED YOU TO CONTINUE EMPHASIZING SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AS A VITAL COMPONENT FOR JOB GROWTH AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.

WE NEED YOU TO SUPPORT THE GROWTH OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM AND TECH INNOVATION.

WE NEED YOU TO FOSTER OTHER TARGET INDUSTRIES THROUGH THE CREATION OF A FASHION INCUBATOR FOR EXAMPLE...

AND IN AVIATION BY SUPPORTING OUR EFFORTS TO BRING AN AIR SHOW TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...

HELP US PUT AN END TO THE BRAIN DRAIN BY PROMOTING A TALENT DEVELOPMENT NETWORK...

ONE THAT FOSTERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR ECONOMIC AND CIVIC GROWTH.

WE HAVE PUT AN END TO THE DAYS WHEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES WORKED IN ISOLATION.

OUR APPROACH NEEDS TO BE HOLISTIC - WITH ALL OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC, PRIVATE, ACADEMIC, NON-PROFITS - ALL WORKING AS PARTNERS - ACTING TOGETHER.

AND OUR BLUEPRINT IS THE ONE COMMUNITY, ONE GOAL INITIATIVE.

AS THE CHAIR OF O.C.O.G., I AM COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THIS PLAN AS THEY REPRESENT THE MAIN STRATEGIC VISION FOR OUR REGION.

I AM ALSO COMMITTED TO PUTTING INTO EFFECT THE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ARE WITHIN MY GOVERNANCE...

INCLUDING CREATING AN EFFICIENT REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT AND NEEDED INVESTMENTS THAT SUPPORT AND PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

YOU HAVE A STRONG PARTNER IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE.

AND I CHALLENGE ALL OF YOU TO JOIN ME IN BUILDING A BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT THAT PREPARES US FOR BETTER AND MORE EFFECTIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

ALL OF YOU ARE ESSENTIAL PARTS OF THIS GOAL...

AND I AM COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH YOU TO ACHIEVE OUR COMMUNITY'S LONG-TERM SUCCESS.

THANK YOU!

