

GOOD MORNING! BUENOS DIAS! BONJOUR!

COMMISSIONER ZAPATA, THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING WITH US. YOU ARE A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR YOUR DISTRICT AND THE "WEST END," AND I'M CERTAIN YOUR CONSTITUENTS APPRECIATE YOUR DEDICATION.

FATHER SOMARRIBA AND RABBI ROSENBERG - THANK YOU FOR YOUR BEAUTIFUL INVOCATIONS.

DR. ROSENBERG, I APPRECIATE THAT KIND INTRODUCTION. I ALSO WANT TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE TO YOU FOR LEADING FIU TO NEW HEIGHTS. THE UNIVERSITY IS NOW THE FOURTH-LARGEST IN THE COUNTRY WITH OVER 54,000 STUDENTS. ITS IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY IS WELL KNOWN WITH APPROXIMATELY 200,000 GRADUATES RESIDING MOSTLY IN AND AROUND MIAMI-DADE COUNTY. AND THIS PAST NOVEMBER, VOTERS SUPPORTED THE UNIVERSITY'S EXPANSION.

LET ME STATE HERE TODAY THAT FIU AND THE FAIR HAVE MY COMMITMENT TO WORKING TOWARDS A WIN-WIN SOLUTION FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

FIU'S G R O W T H I S T R U L Y R E M A R K A B L E .

WHAT'S ALSO REMARKABLE IS THAT THERE WAS SUCH A BUZZ AROUND CAMPUS ABOUT THE STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS YESTERDAY THAT PRESIDENT OBAMA DECIDED TO VISIT A DAY EARLY.

THANK YOU, DR. ROSENBERG AND FIU.

WE APPRECIATE SANDRA PEEBLES FROM UNIVISION SERVING AS OUR EMCEE THIS MORNING. THANK YOU, SANDRA.

AND TO THE FIU SCHOOL OF MUSIC STUDENTS WHO PERFORMED FOR US PRIOR TO BEGINNING TODAY - YOU WERE GREAT. THANK YOU.

I ALSO WANT TO RECOGNIZE FIU STUDENT MONIQUE GALVAO FOR SINGING OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM. THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL. THANK YOU.

AND ALSO THE STUDENTS OF CARLOS J. FINLAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, A SCHOOL VERY CLOSE TO MY WIFE'S HEART, THANK YOU FOR LEADING US IN THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

WITH US THIS MORNING IS CHAIRMAN JEAN MONESTIME. HE MADE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

HISTORY BY BECOMING THE FIRST HAITIAN-AMERICAN TO BE ELECTED BY HIS COLLEAGUES TO LEAD OUR 13-MEMBER BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HIM AND VICE CHAIRMAN ESTEBAN BOVO OVER THE NEXT YEAR. THANK YOU BOTH FOR BEING HERE.

MEMBERS OF OUR BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS - WELCOME AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AND FOR SETTING POSITIVE EXAMPLES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITY, SOME OF WHICH ARE PROBABLY HERE WITH US IN THE AUDIENCE TODAY.

I ALSO WANT TO THANK AND RECOGNIZE FORMER CHAIRWOMAN REBECA SOSA FOR THE WORK THAT SHE DID LEADING THE BOARD OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS. THANK YOU, COMMISSIONER SOSA.

PROPERTY APPRAISER PEDRO GARCIA, AND COUNTY ATTORNEY BOB CUEVAS ALSO ARE WITH US. THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO IN SERVICE TO OUR RESIDENTS.

ALSO PRESENT TO SHARE IN THIS OCCASION ARE MAYORS AND CITY LEADERS FROM MANY OF MIAMI-DADE'S 34 MUNICIPALITIES. THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING TODAY AND FOR YOUR SERVICE.

WELCOME ALSO TO SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRWOMAN PERLA TABARES HANTMAN, MEMBERS OF THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD, AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF OUR CONSULAR CORPS WHO ARE SERVING IN OUR COMMUNITY.

FINALLY, TO MY WIFE LOURDES, OUR THREE CHILDREN, FIVE GRANDCHILDREN AND MY PARENTS - THANK YOU. YOU ARE THE REASON I RAN FOR MAYOR NEARLY FOUR YEARS AGO, AND I APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT.

LOS QUIERO MUCHO.

QUIERO AGRADECER A DR. MARK ROSENBERG POR PERMITIRNOS TRAERLES EL ESTADO DEL CONDADO EN ESTE HERMOSO AUDITORIO Y POR SU LIDERAZGO EN CONVERTIR A F.I.U. EN LA 4TA UNIVERSIDAD MÁS GRANDE DEL PAÍS.

QUIERO DARLE LA BIENVENIDA AL NUEVO PRESIDENTE DE NUESTRA JUNTA DE COMISIONADOS, EL HONORABLE JEAN MONESTIME QUIEN HA HECHO HISTORIA AL SER EL PRIMER HAITIANO-AMERICANO EN PRESIDIR NUESTRA COMISIÓN CONDAL.

BIENVENIDO TAMBIEN AL VICE PRESIDENTE ESTEBAN BOVO Y A TODOS NUESTROS COMISIONADOS PRESENTES.

TAMBIEN CON NOSOTROS SE ENCUENTRAN VARIOS ALCALDES Y OTROS SERVIDORES PÚBLICOS INCLUYENDO A LOS MIEMBROS DE LA JUNTA ESCOLAR Y LOS CÓNSULES.

A MI FAMILIA – MI ESPOSA LOURDES, MIS HIJOS, MIS NIETOS Y MIS PADRES.

MUCHAS GRACIAS POR SU APOYO INCONDICIONAL.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS TURNED THE CORNER.

THE STATE OF OUR COUNTY IS STRONG.

BETTER DAYS ARE AHEAD BECAUSE WE ALL CAME TOGETHER IN THE MOST DIFFICULT OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

AS THE EFFECTS OF THE RECESSION BEGAN TO BE FELT, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY GOVERNMENT HAD TO MAKE DIFFICULT DECISIONS WHICH RESULTED IN EMPLOYEE CONCESSIONS, SCALING BACK ON SERVICES FOR OUR RESIDENTS, AND PUTTING MANY PROJECTS ON HOLD.

BUT BECAUSE THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FAMILY WORKED TOGETHER, BECAUSE WE SACRIFICED AT A CRITICAL TIME IN OUR HISTORY, MOST EMPLOYEE BENEFITS THAT HAD BEEN SUSPENDED HAVE BEEN RESTORED.

AND LET ME SAY THIS ABOUT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S 25,000 EMPLOYEES – YOUR SACRIFICES HAVE NOT GONE UNNOTICED. SOME OF YOU ARE HERE TODAY, WHILE MANY OF YOU ARE WATCHING THIS VIA LIVE STREAM FROM OTHER LOCATIONS.

YOU ALL ENDURED THROUGH HISTORICALLY CHALLENGING ECONOMIC TIMES AND CONTINUED TO PUT SERVICE TO OTHERS ABOVE YOURSELVES.

I COULDN'T BE PROUDER TO LEAD SUCH A DEDICATED WORKFORCE THAT PROVIDES ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR OUR 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS.

I SAY THIS NOT JUST AS YOUR MAYOR, BUT ALSO AS A LIFELONG PUBLIC SERVANT. THANK YOU TO YOU ALL.

LET'S PLEASE GIVE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY EMPLOYEES A WELL-DESERVED ROUND OF APPLAUSE.

OVER THE LAST YEAR, MY ADMINISTRATION WORKED WITH OUR LABOR PARTNERS AND OTHERS TO CLOSE A BUDGET GAP OF MORE THAN \$200 MILLION.

ALTHOUGH MANY THROUGHOUT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTED TO THIS EFFORT, I WANT TO RECOGNIZE THE WORK OF OUR



BUDGET DIRECTOR JENNIFER MOON FOR HER EFFORTS THROUGHOUT THIS PROCESS.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AVERTED HUNDREDS OF LAYOFFS. RATHER THAN ACCEPTING THE WORST CASE SCENARIO, WE WORKED TOGETHER TO REDUCE EXPENSES AND FREE UP RESOURCES TO CLOSE THE GAP.

LED BY DEPUTY MAYOR ED MARQUEZ, MY ADMINISTRATION ALSO OFFERED EMPLOYEES A REDESIGNED HEALTHCARE PLAN THAT WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE EXCELLENT COVERAGE WHILE SAVING MILLIONS IN COSTS TO BOTH OUR EMPLOYEES AND THE COUNTY.

TO DATE, FIVE OF OUR TEN BARGAINING UNITS HAVE AGREED TO THIS NEW HEALTHCARE PLAN THAT IS ALSO PROJECTED TO SAVE APPROXIMATELY \$26 MILLION THIS FISCAL YEAR.

IF OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE REMAINING FIVE BARGAINING UNITS ARE TO BE SUCCESSFUL, THE SAVINGS WOULD RISE TO A PROJECTED \$50 MILLION.



IN THE END, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PRESERVED ESSENTIAL SERVICES, AVERTED HUNDREDS OF LAYOFFS AND EVEN EXPANDED LIBRARY HOURS.

WE ALSO MADE SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS THAT WILL BENEFIT FUTURE GENERATIONS OF COUNTY RESIDENTS.

AND WE DID THIS WHILE MAINTAINING TAX RATES LOW.

WHILE SOME ADVOCATED FOR SUBSTANTIALLY RAISING TAXES TO SOLVE OUR FISCAL CHALLENGES, I BELIEVED THEN AND CONTINUE TO BELIEVE NOW THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SHOULD ONLY ENACT A TAX INCREASE IF IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. IN MY VIEW, THE COUNTY COULD OPERATE MORE EFFICIENTLY WITHOUT SACRIFICING ESSENTIAL SERVICES.

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT WE DID.

SINCE I WAS FIRST ELECTED MAYOR, WE HAVE SAVED TAXPAYERS ABOUT 750 MILLION DOLLARS – THAT'S THREE-QUARTERS OF A BILLION DOLLARS. I'M CONFIDENT THAT A TAX INCREASE IN THE NEXT

FISCAL YEAR WILL NOT BE NECESSARY. IN FACT, ASSUMING THE SAME LEVEL OF SERVICE DELIVERY, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS ON TRACK TO HAVE A BALANCED BUDGET OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WITHOUT RAISING OVERALL TAX RATES.

AND THAT IS WHAT "TURNING THE CORNER" LOOKS LIKE!

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ALSO LEADS FLORIDA IN JOB CREATION. OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS, OUR BUSINESSES HAVE CREATED APPROXIMATELY 117,000 JOBS. THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WHEN I FIRST BECAME MAYOR WAS HOVERING AROUND 12 PERCENT. TODAY IT STANDS AT 6.7 PERCENT.

MANY OF OUR RESIDENTS ARE REJOINING THE WORKFORCE, AND MORE BUSINESSES ARE HIRING AND INVESTING HERE AGAIN.

IN DECEMBER, I JOINED BEACON COUNCIL PRESIDENT AND CEO LARRY WILLIAMS TO RECOGNIZE THE 39 BUSINESSES THAT EITHER EXPANDED OR RELOCATED TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IN 2014. THAT ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED

2,176 NEW JOBS AND MORE THAN \$536 MILLION IN NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENTS.

I WANT TO THANK OUR PARTNERS AT THE BEACON COUNCIL FOR WORKING TO EXPAND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL HERE IN MIAM-DADE COUNTY.

TODAY IS ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO ANNOUNCE THAT 14.6 MILLION VISITORS STAYED OVERNIGHT IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IN 2014. THAT'S A NEW RECORD!

THOSE VISITORS SPENT ANOTHER RECORD \$23.5 BILLION WHILE THEY WERE HERE AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, TOURISM SUPPORTED OVER 130,000 JOBS IN OUR COUNTY.

WE ALL KNOW THAT MIAMI-DADE IS A DESIRABLE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, PLAY AND VISIT. BUT BILL TALBERT, THE PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU, ALONG WITH HIS TEAM, HELPED US TO CONTINUE TO SHATTER RECORDS THROUGH THEIR WORK MARKETING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

LIKE THE BEACON COUNCIL, THE GMCVB IS A MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PARTNER. VISITORS ARE NOT COMING TO MIAMI-DADE BECAUSE OF OUR BEACHES ALONE. THEY ARE VISITING LITTLE HAVANA, OVERTOWN, AND OTHER MULTICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOODS, AS WELL AS THE EVERGLADES AND YES, HAVING THE OBLIGATORY CAFECITO.

AND IT COULDN'T BE DONE WITHOUT OUR PARTNERS AT THE GMCVB PROMOTING OUR COUNTY AROUND THE WORLD!

BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY DO, THE WORLD IS COMING TO MIAMI-DADE.

THANK YOU BILL AND THE GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO!

INCREDIBLY, OF THE NEARLY 15 MILLION PEOPLE WHO VISITED MIAMI-DADE COUNTY LAST YEAR, 96 PERCENT ARRIVED THROUGH MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. NINETY-SIX PERCENT!

IT'S NO WONDER THEN THAT MIA CONTINUES TO BE OUR TOP ECONOMIC ENGINE.

LAST YEAR, APPROXIMATELY \$33.7 BILLION IN BUSINESS REVENUE AND 40.9 MILLION PASSENGERS CAME THROUGH MIA. IT WAS THE FIFTH-CONSECUTIVE RECORD-BREAKING YEAR.

OUR AIRPORT ALSO SET AN ALL-TIME RECORD FOR CARGO IN 2014 WITH 2.2 MILLION TONS OF GOODS MOVED, INCLUDING ALL OF THOSE VALENTINE'S DAY FLOWERS. IN FACT, MIA RANKS AS AMERICA'S #1 AIRPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL FREIGHT, SOMETHING THAT OUR COMMUNITY CAN TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN.

MIA ALSO ADDED ITS 100TH CARRIER IN 2014 - AGAIN, NO OTHER AIRPORT IN THE U.S. CAN MAKE THAT CLAIM.

AND WITH THE ADDITION OF QATAR AIRWAYS SERVICE LAST JUNE, MIA IS NOW THE ONLY AIRPORT IN FLORIDA TO OFFER DIRECT SERVICE TO THE MIDDLE EAST.

AS IMPRESSIVE AS THOSE STATISTICS ARE, WE MUST ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT MIA SUPPORTS OVER 300,000 JOBS EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY.

OUR DIRECTOR EMILIO GONZÁLEZ AND THE ENTIRE AVIATION DEPARTMENT TEAM ARE DOING A TREMENDOUS JOB OF DRIVING AND MANAGING ITS GROWTH. I THANK THEM FOR THEIR EFFORTS!

GREAT THINGS ARE ALSO HAPPENING AT PORTMIAMI.

OUR PORT HAD A \$27 BILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT ON OUR LOCAL ECONOMY AND OVER 200,000 JOBS WERE EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY SUPPORTED BY IT.

"THE CRUISE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD" BROKE ANOTHER WORLD RECORD BY WELCOMING APPROXIMATELY 4.8 MILLION MULTI-DAY PASSENGERS IN 2014!

ADDITIONALLY, LAST SUMMER THE PORTMIAMI TUNNEL OPENED. IT IS NOW ALLEVIATING TRAFFIC BY REMOVING APPROXIMATELY 14,000 VEHICLES FROM DOWNTOWN ROADWAYS EVERY DAY.

THE PROJECT WAS A SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP AND WILL SERVE AS A MODEL FOR FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AROUND THE COUNTY.

ALSO, THE DEEP DREDGE PROJECT AT PORTMIAMI IS EXPECTED TO WRAP UP THIS SUMMER. ONCE COMPLETED, OUR PORT WILL BE ONE OF ONLY FOUR U.S. ATLANTIC PORTS TO BE "BIG SHIP READY" AND ABLE TO BERTH DEEP DRAFT MEGASHIPS CAPABLE OF ACCESSING THE EXPANDED PANAMA CANAL, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED SOMETIME IN 2016.

ALL OF THIS IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF THE COMMITMENT OF DIRECTOR JUAN KURLA AND HIS TEAM AT PORTMIAMI!

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH DIRECTORS GONZALEZ AND KURLA AS WELL AS COMMISSIONER JOSE "PEPE" DIAZ, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRADE AND TOURISM COMMITTEE, OVER THE NEXT YEAR.

DE LOS 15 MILLONES DE VISITANTES QUE RECIBIÓ MIAMI-DADE EL AÑO PASADO, EL 96 PORCIENTO DE



ESOS VISITANTES LLEGARON A TRAVÉS DEL AEROPUERTO INTERNACIONAL DE MIAMI.

ES POR ESO QUE M.I.A. ES NUESTRO PRINCIPAL MOTOR ECONÓMICO.

M.I.A GENERA MÁS DE 300,000 EMPLEOS EN NUESTRA COMUNIDAD.

Y EL AÑO PASADO EL AEROPUERTO RECIBIÓ CASI 41 MILLONES DE PASAJEROS.

POR OTRA PARTE, EL PUERTO DE MIAMI TUVO UN IMPACTO ECONÓMICO DE 27 MIL MILLONES DE DOLARES Y CREÓ MÁS DE 200,000 EMPLEOS EN EL 2014.

TAMBIEN, EL TÚNEL ABRIÓ EL VERANO PASADO Y YA UNOS 14,000 VEHICULOS LO ESTAN UTILIZANDO.

QUIERO AGRADECER A LOS DIRECTORES DE AMBOS PUERTOS, EMILIO GONZALEZ Y JUAN KURLA POR SU ESFUERZO Y DEDICACIÓN.

WHILE OUR ECONOMIC GROWTH IS WONDERFUL TO REPORT, I WAS ELECTED TO SERVE AS MAYOR OF ALL OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY - ALL ROUGHLY 2,400

SQUARE MILES OF IT. EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD MATTERS TO ME BECAUSE AS I LIKE TO SAY, WE ARE ALL MIAMIANS .

TODOS SOMOS MIAMIENSES.

NOU TOUT SE MOUN MIAMI.

INDEED, UNEMPLOYMENT AND CRIME IN LIBERTY CITY, OVERTOWN AND OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULDN'T ONLY CONCERN THOSE AREA RESIDENTS. IT SHOULD ALSO BE WORRISOME FOR MIAMIANS IN KENDALL AND MIAMI BEACH. A FAMILY STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET IN FLORIDA CITY OR NARANJA, SHOULD BE CONCERNING FOR RESIDENTS IN MIAMI LAKES, DORAL AND CORAL GABLES AS WELL, BECAUSE WE ARE ALL MIAMIANS.

THAT IS WHY MY ADMINISTRATION HAS GOVERNED WITH A COUNTYWIDE PERSPECTIVE.

LIBERTY CITY IS A HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD IN OUR COUNTY'S LARGEST MUNICIPALITY – THE CITY

OF MIAMI. THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE THERE IS ABOVE 20 PERCENT. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY CONTINUES TO BE HIGH AND IS EXASPERATED DUE TO THE LACK OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES.

IN THE FALL OF LAST YEAR, MY ADMINISTRATION TOOK ACTION AND INTRODUCED THE "EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE" INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS IN NEIGHBORHOODS WITH HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF DEPUTY MAYOR RUSSELL BENFORD, EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IS LEVERAGING STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES TO RECRUIT, TRAIN, AND PLACE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WITHIN OUR WORKFORCE.

I'M FULLY COMMITTED TO THIS INITIATIVE'S SUCCESS, WHICH IS WHY I CONTRIBUTED \$42,000 FROM MY OWN OFFICE BUDGET TOWARDS EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE AS WE WERE PREPARING TO LAUNCH.

THE INITIATIVE IS USING FEDERAL, STATE AND PRIVATE SECTOR DOLLARS TO FUND ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDE STIPENDS TO PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WHILE THEY ARE IN TRAINING.

I WANT TO RECOGNIZE THE ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS OF MIAMI-DADE FOR ITS STRONG COMMITMENT TO EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE'S SUCCESS. ABC HAS CONTRIBUTED \$30,000 TO THE INITIATIVE, WHILE ONE UNITED BANK PRESENTED THE COUNTY WITH A \$10,000 CHECK AT THE DECEMBER LAUNCH.

MY ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO ENSURE THAT MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS ARE THE FIRST IN LINE FOR THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE HERE NOW, OR ARE COMING SOON.

AND THIS IS WHY EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IS SO IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTY AND ONE OF MY TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

I BELIEVE THE BEST WAY OUT OF POVERTY IS THROUGH A GOOD JOB.

WE HAVE THE RESOURCES TO OFFER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR RESIDENTS, AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS LOOKING TO HIRE A LOCAL WORKFORCE INSTEAD OF IMPORTING LABOR FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE STATE OR EVEN THE COUNTRY. OUR WORKFORCE SHOULD LOOK LIKE

OUR COMMUNITY. SO LET'S CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE RESIDENTS WHO WANT TO WORK THE TRAINING THEY NEED TO SECURE EMPLOYMENT. IT IS A WIN-WIN FOR OUR RESIDENTS, OUR BUSINESSES AND OUR COUNTY!

TO DATE, APPROXIMATELY 500 RESIDENTS HAVE ENROLLED IN THE FIRST TRAINING CLASSES, AND MANY HAVE ALREADY SECURED EMPLOYMENT.

ALTHOUGH OUR INITIAL FOCUS IS THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, SOON EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE WILL BEGIN OFFERING TRAINING FOR CAREERS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY AS WELL.

EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE GOOD WORK OF RICK BEASLEY OF CAREERSOURCE SOUTH FLORIDA, LEROY JONES OF NEIGHBORS AND NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION, AND PETER DYGA OF ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS. AND OF COURSE, WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE COMMISSIONER AUDREY EDMONSON AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER DR. DOROTHY BENDROSS-MINDINGALL FOR

SUPPORTING EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IN THEIR DISTRICTS. THANK YOU TO ALL.

CHAIRMAN MONESTIME, I'M CONFIDENT THAT THE WORK OF THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY COMMITTEE – WHICH IS CHAIRED BY COMMISSIONER XAVIER SUAREZ – WILL COMPLIMENT THE EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE INITIATIVE. TOGETHER, WE CAN ADDRESS DISPARITIES IN OUR COUNTY. AND WE WILL.

A PESAR DE LOS AVANCES QUE HEMOS LOGRADO EN EL CONDADO, EXISTEN ALGUNAS ÁREAS QUE NO HAN PODIDO DISFRUTAR DEL CRECIMIENTO ECONÓMICO.

POR ESA RAZÓN EN DICIEMBRE LANZAMOS NUESTRA INICIATIVA “EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE” COMO UN ESFUERZO COLECTIVO ENTRE LÍDERES DE NUESTRA COMUNIDAD Y MI ADMINISTRACIÓN, PARA AYUDAR A RESIDENTES INTERESADOS EN TRABAJAR EN LA INDUSTRIA DE LA CONSTRUCCIÓN.

ESTA SERÁ UNA DE MIS PRIORIDADES EN LOS PRÓXIMOS DOS AÑOS PORQUE CONSIDERO QUE LA MEJOR MANERA DE SALIR DE LA POBREZA ES A TRAVÉS DE UN BUEN EMPLEO.

EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IS NOT THE ONLY INITIATIVE MY ADMINISTRATION HAS LAUNCHED TO ADDRESS CRITICAL ISSUES IN NEIGHBORHOODS IN NEED.

I HAVE ALSO PROPOSED THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORIC LIBERTY SQUARE PUBLIC HOUSING COMMUNITY IN LIBERTY CITY.

IF WE SECURE THE SUPPORT OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, WE WILL DIRECT \$74 MILLION IN COUNTY FUNDS TO REBUILD THE LINCOLN GARDENS PUBLIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOP AND REVITALIZE LIBERTY SQUARE. \$32 MILLION OF THAT TOTAL WOULD COME FROM THE VOTER-APPROVED GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND. WE ARE ALSO CONFIDENT THAT THIS INITIAL COUNTY INVESTMENT WILL ATTRACT HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS MORE IN PRIVATE INVESTMENT.



LIBERTY SQUARE WAS ORIGINALLY BUILT IN THE LATE 1930S. TODAY, IT IS HOME TO SOME 2,000 RESIDENTS WHO UNFORTUNATELY HAVE ENDURED UNWELCOME CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AND HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT.

CURRENT RESIDENTS WILL STAY IN THEIR HOMES UNTIL A NEW COMMUNITY IS CONSTRUCTED IN LINCOLN GARDENS IN BROWNSVILLE. RESIDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO RETURN TO THE NEW LIBERTY SQUARE UPON ITS COMPLETION SOMETIME IN 2019.

"LIBERTY SQUARE RISING", AS WE HAVE NAMED THE EFFORT, IS ANOTHER TOP PRIORITY FOR MY ADMINISTRATION AND IS BEING LED BY OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MR. MICHAEL LIU.

MICHAEL BRINGS DECADES OF EXPERIENCE WITH THESE TYPES OF REDEVELOPMENTS, HAVING WORKED AS THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN WASHINGTON, D.C. I AM CONFIDENT THAT MICHAEL AND HIS TEAM ARE UP TO THE TASK.

THIS PROJECT IS A COMMITMENT MY ADMINISTRATION INTENDS TO KEEP. THE COUNTY HAS LEARNED FROM OTHER WELL-INTENTIONED EFFORTS THAT PREDATE MY ADMINISTRATION, AND WE WILL NOT BE REPEATING THE SAME MISTAKES.

SOME HAVE ASKED ME 'WHY NOW'?

'WHY REDEVELOP LIBERTY SQUARE TODAY?'

MY RESPONSE HAS BEEN 'WHY NOT NOW?' AND 'IF NOT NOW, WHEN?'

PUBLIC OFFICIALS ARE ELECTED TO DO BIG THINGS AND ADDRESS PROBLEMS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, WE DO BIG THINGS. LIBERTY CITY RISING WILL BE A BIG THING WE DO FOR OUR RESIDENTS IN LIBERTY CITY, THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS AND FOR ALL OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

EVEN WITH ALL THE POSITIVE NEWS WE HAVE SHARED TODAY, "TURNING THE CORNER" DOESN'T

MEAN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS SIGNIFICANT NEEDS.

OUR COUNTY HAS A POPULATION LARGER THAN 15 U.S. STATES, AND AS I MENTIONED BEFORE, 14.6 MILLION VISITORS VISITED US IN 2014. WHILE WE WELCOME NEW RESIDENTS AND VISITORS, THIS GROWTH STRAINS OUR EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE.

PART OF OUR CHALLENGE FOR BUILDING AND REPAIRING INFRASTRUCTURE IS THAT WE ARE GROUND ZERO FOR SEA LEVEL RISE. AS COMMISSIONER SOSA AND MEMBERS OF THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SEA LEVEL TASK FORCE CAN TELL YOU, WE MUST CONSIDER SEA LEVEL RISE PROJECTIONS FOR ALL FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS. AND WE WILL.

MY ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO WORK WITH OUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATORS AND RESIDENTS TO PREPARE OUR COUNTY TO DEAL WITH SEA LEVEL RISE.

THE SCARCITY OF FEDERAL FUNDING FOR LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS PRESENTS ANOTHER CHALLENGE.

AS MY DEPUTY MAYOR AND DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS ALINA HUDAK LIKES TO REMIND ME, THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT HAS APPROXIMATELY \$1.2 BILLION IN INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS TODAY. THAT TOTAL DOES NOT INCLUDE THE FEDERALLY-MANDATED MODERNIZATION OF OUR WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM.

THE WATER AND SEWER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WILL BE THE LARGEST IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HISTORY AND WILL COST AN ESTIMATED \$13.5 BILLION DOLLARS OVER THE NEXT 15 TO 20 YEARS.

I HAVE GREAT CONFIDENCE IN THE DEPARTMENT'S NEW DIRECTOR, LESTER SOLA, WHO WILL OVERSEE THIS WORK THAT IS SO CRITICAL TO OUR COUNTY'S FUTURE.

WHILE THERE IS INDEED MUCH WORK TO BE DONE TO ENHANCE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING OUR ROADS AND BRIDGES, YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT HAS WORKED DILIGENTLY OVER THE PAST YEAR.

IN 2014, WE COMPLETED THE RICKENBACKER WEST BRIDGE/BEAR CUT REHABILITATION THAT WILL EXTEND THE LIFE OF THE BRIDGES AND IMPROVE VEHICULAR, PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY. THIS PROJECT WAS COMPLETED OVER A TWO-YEAR PERIOD AND I WANT TO RECOGNIZE THE PROFESSIONALS IN OUR PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT FOR THEIR DEDICATION.

THE COUNTY ALSO CONVERTED THE RICKENBACKER AND VENETIAN CAUSEWAYS TO ELECTRONIC TOLL COLLECTION, WHICH IS ALREADY ALLEVIATING TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND REDUCING OUR COSTS.

AND SPEAKING OF TOLLS...

I AM WELL AWARE THAT THE MIAMI-DADE EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY HAS BEGUN COLLECTING FARES FOR THE USE OF HIGHWAYS THAT WERE ONCE MOSTLY TOLL-FREE. WHILE I DON'T HAVE OVERSIGHT OF MDX, NOR DO I APPOINT MEMBERS TO THEIR BOARD, I WANT TO ENSURE THAT THE FARES BEING COLLECTED ARE ALLOCATED CORRECTLY TO THE BENEFIT OF THIS

COMMUNITY. THAT IS WHY MY ADMINISTRATION HAS HOSTED AND WILL CONTINUE TO HOST MEETINGS BETWEEN MDX AND CONCERNED CITIZENS SO THAT WE CAN ENSURE THAT THERE IS COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ALL PARTIES AND THAT TOLL MONEY IS BEING SPENT THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE.

PART OF THE GROWING PAINS WE ARE EXPERIENCING AS A COMMUNITY IS THE INCREASING TRAFFIC ON OUR CONGESTED ROADWAYS.

THE TIME WE SPEND IN OUR VEHICLES COMMUTING TO AND FROM WORK IS TIME WE ARE NOT SPENDING WITH OUR FAMILIES.

THAT IS WHY MY ADMINISTRATION IS TAKING A MULTIPRONGED APPROACH TO ADDRESSING TRAFFIC IN OUR COUNTY.

OUR TRANSIT DEPARTMENT IS WORKING TO ADD RAPID BUS TRANSIT CORRIDORS TO IMPROVE EAST-WEST CONNECTIVITY, SO THAT RESIDENTS OF OUR HEAVILY POPULATED WESTERN SUBURBS CAN HAVE ANOTHER OPTION TO GET FROM THEIR

OFFICES AND BACK TO THEIR HOMES. I KNOW COMMISSIONER ZAPATA WILL APPRECIATE THAT.

IN ADDITION, THE DEPARTMENT IS PLACING 35 NEW DIESEL-ELECTRIC HYBRID BUSES INTO SERVICE BY NEXT YEAR.

NEW METRORAIL CARS ARE ALSO SCHEDULED TO BE PUT INTO SERVICE BY NEXT YEAR. THEY WILL REPLACE OUR 30-YEAR OLD FLEET.

I ALSO WANT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT I OPPOSE INSTITUTING A \$.25 FARE FOR OUR METROMOVER SYSTEM DOWNTOWN. THIS SERVICE HAS BEEN FARE-FREE SINCE 2002.

IT WAS A PROMISE FROM THE PEOPLE'S TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND IT'S ONE WE SHOULD KEEP.

AUNQUE HEMOS SUPERADO PRUEBAS DIFÍCILES Y NOS ALEGRA SABER QUE EL FUTURO ES PROSPERO, ACTUALMENTE EL CONDADO AFRONTA UN DÉFICIT DE MÁS DE MIL MILLONES DE DÓLARES EN INFRAESTRUCTURA.



ESTAMOS TRABAJANDO PARA MEJORAR LAS OBRAS DE NUESTRO DEPARTAMENTO DE AGUAS Y ALCANTARRILLADOS Y NUESTRAS VÍAS PÚBLICAS.

TAMBIEN NOS HEMOS REUNIDO CON MDX Y MIEMBROS DE LA COMUNIDAD CON RESPECTO A LOS NUEVOS PEAJES. QUEREMOS ASEGURARNOS DE QUE EXISTE COMUNICACIÓN ENTRE AMBAS PARTES Y QUE EL DINERO SE ESTÁ UTILIZANDO CORRECTAMENTE.

ADEMÁS, NUESTRO DEPARTAMENTO DE TRANSPORTE ESTÁ TRABAJANDO PARA AGREGAR NUEVOS AUTOBÚSES A SU FLOTILLA.

CON RELACIÓN AL METROMOVER, QUIERO ACLARAR QUE ME OPONGO A CUALQUIER TARIFA QUE SE QUIERA IMPONER A LOS RESIDENTES Y VISITANTES DE MIAMI-DADE. ES UNA PROMESA QUE QUIERO CUMPLIR.

AND SPEAKING OF PROMISES, ONE THAT MY ADMINISTRATION HAS MADE IS TO STUDY THE DEVELOPMENT OF A KEY PIECE OF INFRASTRUCTURE THAT WILL ENHANCE THE

QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OUR RESIDENTS, AND BE LOCATED RIGHT UNDER THE EXISTING METRORAIL.

THE UNDERLINE WILL CONNECT COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY, CREATE HUNDREDS OF ACRES OF GREEN SPACE, CREATE A MOBILITY CORRIDOR THAT INTEGRATES ALL MODES OF TRANSIT, AND WILL GENERATE SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC IMPACT. THE UNDERLINE IS THE ONLY URBAN TRAIL DIRECTLY LINKED TO TRANSIT AND IS THE HEART OF MY BROADER VISION FOR A CONNECTED BIKING SYSTEM FOR ALL MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

SENIOR ADVISER MICHAEL SPRING, JACK KARDYS AND HIS TEAM IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES DESERVE RECOGNITION FOR THEIR HARD WORK, AS DOES MEG DALY – A CITIZEN WHO IS PASSIONATELY ADVOCATING FOR THIS PROJECT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION TO THE UNDERLINE.

I AM ALSO HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THAT I WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION “MAYOR’S CHALLENGE FOR

SAFER PEOPLE, SAFER STREETS". THE GOAL OF THIS NATIONAL WORKING GROUP IS TO IMPROVE SAFETY FOR BOTH BICYCLISTS AND RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES.

LIKE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, OUR GREEN SPACES, OUR MUSEUMS, THEATERS AND ARTS CENTERS CONTINUE TO GROW. THEY OFFER GREAT ENTERTAINMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES AND GIVE OUR COMMUNITY THE COMPETITIVE EDGE FOR ATTRACTING BUSINESSES, VISITORS AND A 21ST CENTURY WORKFORCE.

LAST FALL, OUR ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT BROKE GROUND ON A NEW SHELTER IN DORAL. THE SITE IS ROUGHLY FIVE ACRES AND IS CURRENTLY BEING RENOVATED. I THANK DIRECTOR ALEX MUNOZ, HIS DEPARTMENT AND ALL OTHERS INVOLVED TO HELP MAKE THIS SHELTER A REALITY.

ALEX'S TEAM ALSO DESERVES RECOGNITION FOR THEIR WORK TO RAISE THE SAVE RATE FOR DOGS AND CATS TO ALMOST 82 PERCENT – ONE OF THE HIGHEST SAVE RATES IN FLORIDA.

WHILE THAT IS A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT, WE WILL NOT BE SATISFIED UNTIL WE ARE A NO-KILL COUNTY!

THERE ARE TWO OTHER MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS THAT ARE UNDERWAY TODAY, AND BOTH WILL CHANGE HOW OUR RESIDENTS COMMUTE BETWEEN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AND THE REST OF THE REGION AND STATE.

ALL ABOARD FLORIDA IS A PRIVATELY FUNDED PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE. IT WILL CONNECT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PASSENGERS WITH FORT LAUDERDALE, WEST PALM BEACH AND ORLANDO. THE MIAMI CENTRAL STATION WILL BE BUILT NEXT TO COUNTY HALL AND INCLUDE APPROXIMATELY 3 MILLION SQUARE FEET OF TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT.

PART OF THIS PROJECT INCLUDES CONNECTING THE EXISTING TRI-RAIL SYSTEM TO DOWNTOWN MIAMI. MY ADMINISTRATION IS WORKING TO HELP FUND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TRI-RAIL PLATFORM THAT WILL EVENTUALLY LEAD TO COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE ALONG THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR THAT WILL CONNECT WEST PALM

BEACH, FORT LAUDERDALE AND DOWNTOWN MIAMI. THIS PLATFORM WILL IMMEDIATELY CONNECT DOWNTOWN WITH NORTH-CENTRAL MIAMI-DADE, WHICH INCLUDES MIAMI GARDENS, OPA-LOCKA, HIALEAH, NORTH MIAMI BEACH AND OTHER AREAS.

COMMISSIONER BARBARA JORDAN HAS ADVOCATED FOR IMPROVED TRANSIT OPTIONS THROUGHOUT THIS CORRIDOR OF OUR COUNTY. MY ADMINISTRATION IS WORKING TOGETHER WITH HER AND OUR ENTIRE COMMISSION TO ADDRESS HER CONCERNS.

CONNECTING DOWNTOWN TO MIAMI BEACH IS ALSO AN IMPORTANT GOAL. THAT IS WHY MY ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO WORK WITH LEADERS IN THE CITIES OF MIAMI AND MIAMI BEACH TO IDENTIFY WAYS TO FUND THE CONSTRUCTION OF BAY LINK – A PUBLIC TRANSIT CONNECTION FROM THE MAINLAND TO THE BEACH.

BUT EVEN WITH ALL THESE INVESTMENTS TO IMPROVE OUR TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY NEEDS ADDITIONAL MOBILITY OPTIONS.

LAST YEAR, AT MY URGING, THE COUNTY COMMISSION APPROVED NEW RULES TO MAKE OUR TAXI CABS MORE CUSTOMER-FRIENDLY. I THANK COMMISSIONERS DENNIS MOSS AND BRUNO BARREIRO FOR THEIR WORK ON THAT INITIATIVE.

AND WHILE I WELCOME THOSE IMPROVEMENTS, I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY NEEDS MORE MOBILITY OPTIONS, ESPECIALLY ONES THAT INCORPORATE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO CONNECT WITH USERS.

VICE CHAIRMAN BOVO WILL BE PRESENTING THE COMMISSION WITH A PROPOSAL TO PERMIT THE OPERATION OF APP-BASED MOBILITY COMPANIES IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY. THAT PROPOSAL WILL INCLUDE RESPONSIBLE REGULATION THAT WILL PROTECT CONSUMERS, BUT ALSO INTRODUCE THESE OPTIONS AS ALTERNATIVES TO TRADITIONAL METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION.

FOLKS, WE WILL NOT BE PUTTING THIS GENIE BACK IN THE BOTTLE. APP-BASED MOBILITY OPTIONS LIKE UBER AND LYFT ARE HERE TO STAY, AND IT IS INCUMBENT UPON US TO REGULATE THEM SO OUR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS CAN

LEGALLY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY. IT IS A PRIORITY FOR ME AS MAYOR, AND I'M OPTIMISTIC THAT COMMISSIONERS WILL APPROVE THE LEGISLATION THIS YEAR.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE TRANSIT AND MOBILITY SERVICES COMMITTEE, ESTEBAN BOVO, AND VICE CHAIRMAN MOSS, ON THIS IMPORTANT LEGISLATION LATER THIS YEAR.

WHILE WORKING TO CLOSE OUR BUDGET GAP LAST YEAR, MY ADMINISTRATION COLLABORATED WITH MIAMI BEACH MAYOR PHILIP LEVINE, CITY COMMISSIONERS AND CITY MANAGER JIMMY MORALES TO EXTEND A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND REDIRECT FUNDS TOWARDS THE RENOVATION OF THE MIAMI BEACH CONVENTION CENTER.

THIS COLLABORATIVE EFFORT RESULTED IN SAVING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY APPROXIMATELY \$18 MILLION THIS YEAR WHICH WAS REDIRECTED BACK INTO OUR GENERAL FUND SPECIFICALLY TO



PRESERVE POSITIONS IN OUR POLICE DEPARTMENT. BUT IT WAS ALSO THE RIGHT THING TO DO FOR BOTH THE COUNTY AND THE CITY.

MIAMI-DADE NEEDS A FIRST-RATE CONVENTION CENTER THAT WILL NOT ONLY CREATE MORE JOBS, BUT ALSO WILL ATTRACT WORLD CLASS CONVENTIONS AND EVENTS IN THE FUTURE.

WORKING TOGETHER, WE HAVE TAKEN A BIG STEP TOWARDS THAT, AND I WANT TO THANK CITY OF MIAMI BEACH LEADERS, FOR WORKING WITH MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ON THIS EFFORT.

I MAY BE 61 YEARS OLD, BUT I CONSIDER MYSELF A TECH MAYOR. YES, YOUNG PEOPLE, YOUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS USE SMART PHONES TO TEXT, EMAIL AND EVEN SURF SOCIAL MEDIA. THAT'S SCARY ISN'T IT?

I HAVE WITNESSED WHAT TECHNOLOGY CAN DO TO IMPROVE OUR LIVES AND THE SERVICES THAT GOVERNMENT PROVIDES. THAT IS WHY MY ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN FOCUSED ON

ENHANCING THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT'S TECHNOLOGICAL CAPABILITIES SO THAT WE CAN BETTER SERVE OUR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.

PART OF OUR WORK HAS FOCUSED ON SIMPLIFYING THE PERMITTING PROCESS.

BY 2016, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WILL HAVE ONE CENTRALIZED COMPUTER SYSTEM HANDLING ALL THE ELEMENTS OF THE PERMITTING PROCESS - FROM BEGINNING TO END.

IT WILL BENEFIT OUR RESIDENTS, BUSINESS OWNERS, AND THOSE INTERESTED IN STARTING BUSINESSES. MY ADMINISTRATION'S GOAL IS TO OFFER ALL 34 MUNICIPALITIES IN OUR COUNTY THE OPPORTUNITY TO OPT-IN TO THIS SYSTEM BECAUSE THEIR RESIDENTS ARE OUR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES TOO.

I APPRECIATE THE HARD WORK OF DEPUTY MAYOR JACK OSTERHOLT AND HIS TEAM IN THE REGULATORY AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, AS WELL AS THAT OF ANGEL PETISCO AND THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT.

AND TECHNOLOGY IS WHAT CONTRIBUTED TO A SMOOTH ELECTION PROCESS THIS PAST NOVEMBER. THE COUNTY PURCHASED NEW EQUIPMENT THAT HELPED SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS PENELOPE TOWNSLEY AND HER DEDICATED TEAM IN OUR ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT TO ENSURE THAT OUR VOTERS COULD CAST THEIR BALLOTS QUICKLY AND WITH CONFIDENCE.

THE SECOND ANNUAL EMERGE AMERICAS CONFERENCE IS ANOTHER SIGN THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS QUICKLY BECOMING A HUB FOR INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY. THE EMERGE TEAM IS EXPECTING 10,000 PARTICIPANTS AT THE MIAMI BEACH CONVENTION CENTER AND OTHER VENUES THIS MAY. E-MERGE HAS ALSO ANNOUNCED A PARTNERSHIP WITH NBC UNIVERSAL. I WANT TO THANK MANNY MEDINA AND HIS TEAM FOR ENSURING THAT EMERGE IS BACK IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ONCE AGAIN.

I VIEW TECHNOLOGY AS BEING SO IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY THAT I PERSONALLY FLEW TO SAN FRANCISCO LAST FALL

TO MEET WITH JENNIFER PAHLKA, THE FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CODE FOR AMERICA.

CODE FOR AMERICA IS A NATIONAL NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT BUILDS OPEN SOURCE TECHNOLOGY DEDICATED TO MAKING GOVERNMENT SERVICES SIMPLER, MORE EFFECTIVE AND EASY TO USE.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS THE FIRST GOVERNMENT IN FLORIDA TO BE AWARDED A FELLOWSHIP FROM CODE FOR AMERICA.

THE ONE-YEAR PROGRAM BRINGS THREE TECHNOLOGY SPECIALISTS HERE TO MIAMI-DADE TO WORK WITH COUNTY STAFF TO BUILD APPS AND FOSTER NEW APPROACHES TO PROBLEM-SOLVING THROUGHOUT COUNTY HALL.

THIS COULD NOT HAVE BEEN DONE WITHOUT THE WORK OF OUR COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND OUTREACH DEPARTMENT, ESPECIALLY ONE EMPLOYEE, MICHAEL SARASTI, WHO PASSIONATELY ADVOCATED TO BRING CODE FOR AMERICA TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

WOULD OUR CODE FOR AMERICA FELLOWS PLEASE STAND UP AND BE RECOGNIZED?

WE ALSO SHOULD RECOGNIZE MATT HAGGMAN AND THE KNIGHT FOUNDATION, THE MIAMI FOUNDATION, THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND THE TECH FOUNDATION FOR THE AMERICAS FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AND CODE FOR AMERICA. THANK YOU, ALL.

IT IS AMAZING WHAT TECHNOLOGY CAN DO. EARLIER THIS WEEK, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY INTRODUCED A NEW TRAFFIC APP, WHICH IS THE FIRST OF MANY WE WILL BE UNVEILING IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

TECHNOLOGY IS ALSO KEY TO THE FUTURE OF THE MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

OVER TWO YEARS AGO – WELL BEFORE EVENTS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY SPARKED FIERCE DEBATE – I ASKED OUR MIAMI-DADE POLICE DIRECTOR J.D. PATTERSON TO STUDY THE POTENTIAL USE OF BODY CAMERAS ON OUR POLICE OFFICERS.

WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN TESTED, THE USE OF BODY CAMERAS HAS RESULTED IN A DECREASE IN

THE USE OF FORCE AND JUST AS IMPORTANT, RESULTED IN A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN COMPLAINTS AGAINST POLICE OFFICERS.

I ALSO BELIEVE CAMERAS ARE CRITICAL TO RAISING THE LEVEL OF TRUST BETWEEN POLICE DEPARTMENTS AND RESIDENTS. IN FACT, SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS – LARGE AND SMALL THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY – ARE INVESTING IN CAMERA TECHNOLOGY FOR THEIR OFFICERS.

IN OTHER WORDS, BODY CAMERAS ARE A 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY THAT I BELIEVE WILL BE A STANDARD PART OF THE OFFICERS' UNIFORM IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

I'M PLEASED THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET THE PURCHASE OF 500 CAMERAS FOR MIAMI-DADE POLICE OFFICERS THIS FISCAL YEAR. SOON, OUR OFFICERS WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH THIS TECHNOLOGY.

BUT I WANT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT ALTHOUGH I AM AN ADVOCATE FOR THE USE OF BODY CAMERAS, LIKE LEADERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, I AM AWARE THAT WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO ADDRESS

LEGITIMATE CONCERNS ON PRIVACY BOTH LOCALLY AND IN TALLAHASSEE.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH PUBLIC SAFETY ADVOCATES LIKE COMMISSIONER SALLY HEYMAN – A LAW ENFORCEMENT PROFESSIONAL HERSELF – ON THIS AND OTHER IMPORTANT CONCERNS.

NUESTRA MISIÓN DEBE SEGUIR SIENDO PROTEGER LOS INTERESES DE NUESTROS RESIDENTES SOBRE TODAS LAS COSAS.

COMISIONADOS Y EMPLEADOS, AHORA ES EL MOMENTO DE TRABAJAR JUNTOS PONIENDO NUESTRO SERVICIO PÚBLICO ANTE TODO.

WHILE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS INDEED TURNED THE CORNER, WE ARE STILL VERY MUCH A COMMUNITY IN TRANSITION.

WE ARE EXPERIENCING GROWING PAINS. WE HAVE NEEDS THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED.

DESPITE IT ALL, I'VE NEVER BEEN MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT OUR FUTURE.



AND I BELIEVE THERE ARE PUBLIC SERVANTS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WHO SHARE IN THAT OPTIMISM.

WHAT ELSE OTHER THAN A COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR COUNTY COULD HAVE DRIVEN DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA TO SEEK PUBLIC OFFICE? I KNOW FROM OUR CONVERSATIONS COMMISSIONER, THAT IT IS BECAUSE YOU CARE ABOUT OUR NEIGHBORS AND THE FUTURE THAT WE WILL LEAVE FOR OUR COUNTY AND OUR CHILDREN.

I BELIEVE A LOVE FOR THIS COMMUNITY AND THE POTENTIAL WE HAVE IS WHY SENATOR JAVIER SOUTO CONTINUES TO SERVE HIS DISTRICT DECADES AFTER ALREADY HAVING SERVED IN THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE.

AND WHAT MAKES US A GREAT COMMUNITY, WHAT MAKES US A METROPOLITAN AREA THAT OTHERS LOOK TO, IS THAT WE ARE ALSO VERY ACCEPTING OF ONE ANOTHER.

THAT IS WHY I WAS PROUD TO STAND WITH COMMISSIONERS WHO VOTED TO PROTECT OUR TRANSGENDER RESIDENTS IN DECEMBER OF LAST

YEAR, AND WELCOMED THE COURT RULINGS THAT FINALLY GAVE ADULTS THE RIGHT TO MARRY WHOMEVER THEY CHOOSE.

WE ARE A BETTER COMMUNITY TODAY BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE MY PARENTS AND MY IN-LAWS WHO YEARS AGO LEFT EVERYTHING BEHIND IN CUBA TO COME TO THIS WONDERFUL COUNTRY. AND OTHERS LIKE THEM FROM THROUGHOUT THE HEMISPHERE; FROM COUNTRIES LIKE VENEZUELA AND HAITI, THEY SETTLED HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, THEY WERE WELCOMED. AND THEY WERE SUPPORTED. OUR COUNTY – AND OUR COUNTRY – GAVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO START LIVES HERE, RAISE THEIR FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY, AND BECOME MIAMIANS.

WE MUST REALIZE THAT WE MUST CONTINUE TO PUT THE PEOPLE'S INTEREST FIRST.

THAT IS OUR MISSION AS PUBLIC SERVANTS.

THAT IS HOW MY ADMINISTRATION IS GOVERNING – PUTTING THE PEOPLE'S CONCERNS ABOVE ALL ELSE.

PUTTING SERVICE ABOVE SELF.

THANK YOU, ALL.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND MAY GOD CONTINUE TO  
BLESS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!

