

GOOD AFTERNOON AND THANK YOU ADELINE FOR THAT KIND INTRODUCTION!

I WANT TO THANK ALL OF THE PANELISTS FOR JOINING US TODAY INCLUDING MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE PRESIDENT, DR. EDUARDO PADRON.

DR. PADRON LEADS THE LARGEST COLLEGE IN THE UNITED STATES LOCATED JUST DOWN THE STREET RIGHT HERE IN OUR COMMUNITY. THE INSTITUTION EDUCATES OUR WORKFORCE AND OPENS DOORS FOR THE LEADERS AND INNOVATORS OF TOMORROW.

THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO, DR. PADRON.

OUR AVIATION DIRECTOR, EMILIO GONZALEZ IS HERE. THANK YOU FOR LEADING OUR ECONOMIC ENGINE, MIA.

TERRA PRESIDENT, DAVID MARTIN; RELATED GROUP C.O.O., MATT ALLEN; ARE ALSO HERE. THANK YOU BOTH FOR YOUR WORK IN OUR COMMUNITY.

AND BAPTIST HEALTH C.O.O. AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT WAYNE BRACKIN -- THANK YOU FOR

HELPING MIAMI-DADE BECOME A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY.

THANK YOU *ALL* FOR COMMITTING YOURSELVES TO MAKING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY A WONDERFUL PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, *AND INVEST.*

FRIENDS, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS RAISED THE BAR TO BECOME THE NEXT GLOBAL HUB FOR BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY.

I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT MIAMI-DADE IS WHAT OTHER COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES WILL LOOK AND FEEL LIKE OVER THE NEXT DECADE.

LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD, MIAMI-DADE WEATHERED THE MOST CHALLENGING OF ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES.

I MAY BE BIASED, BUT I BELIEVE WE CAME OUT STRONGER THAN MOST OTHER COMMUNITIES AND THAT WE HAVE A LOT TO LOOK FORWARD TO.

CONSIDER THAT WHEN I FIRST TOOK OFFICE FOUR YEARS AGO NEXT MONTH, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WAS HOVERING AT ABOUT 12 PERCENT.

THAT RATE IS DOWN TO 6.2 PERCENT TODAY...

OUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT - WHICH IS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE LARGEST GOVERNMENTS THAT PROVIDE MUNICIPAL SERVICES TO RESIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES, HAS BECOME MORE EFFICIENT BY REDUCING OUR HEADCOUNT,

STREAMLINING SERVICES THROUGH TECHNOLOGY,

BY BEING INNOVATIVE WITH OUR LABOR AGREEMENTS,

AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, MY ADMINISTRATION HAS HELPED SET THE CONDITIONS FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO GROW BY KEEPING TAXES LOW AND BY COMMITTING TO MAKING CRITICAL INVESTMENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY THAT WILL CREATE THE JOBS THAT WILL BE FILLED BY OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN IN THE FUTURE.

IN FACT, MIAMI-DADE CONTINUES TO BE FLORIDA'S LEADING PRIVATE SECTOR JOB CREATOR WITH OVER 110,000 JOBS ADDED SINCE 2011.

IN OTHER WORDS, WE ARE THE TOP JOB CREATOR IN THE THIRD-MOST POPULOUS STATE IN OUR UNION.

THAT'S AN ACHIEVEMENT I'M PROUD OF.

I SAY IT OFTEN BUT IT IS WORTH REPEATING --

GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE THE JOB CREATOR, BUT IT SHOULD SET THE CONDITIONS THAT ALLOW THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO BE THE JOB CREATOR IN THE COMMUNITY.

WE HAVE DONE THAT HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, IN PART, BY SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCING TAXES.

IN FACT, JUST A WEEK AFTER TAKING OFFICE, MY ADMINISTRATION SECURED APPROVAL FROM THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO CUT NEARLY \$200 MILLION IN PROPERTY TAXES FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS IN JUST THE FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012.

BY NEXT FISCAL YEAR, MY ADMINISTRATION WILL CROSS THE \$1 BILLION MARK.

THAT IS, SINCE OUR ADMINISTRATION CAME INTO OFFICE, WE WILL HAVE REDUCED PROPERTY TAXES \$1 BILLION IN JUST ABOUT FOUR YEARS.

AND THAT HAS HELPED RENEW THE ECONOMY IN OUR COMMUNITY AND ATTRACT INVESTMENTS THAT WILL LEAD TO A MORE DIVERSE LOCAL ECONOMY.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT OUR WORK IS DONE HOWEVER.

WE ARE ON THE RIGHT PATH NOW BECAUSE OUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS LIVING WITHIN ITS MEANS AND WORKING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR THROUGH PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP AND OTHER PROJECTS TO PROVIDE CRITICAL SERVICES TO OUR 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS...

IN MY CONVERSATIONS WITH RESIDENTS, FELLOW ELECTED OFFICIALS AND BUSINESS LEADERS THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY AND YES, FROM AROUND THE WORLD, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE PERCEPTION OF OUR COMMUNITY IS CHANGING.

WE ARE NO LONGER VIEWED JUST AS A WONDERFUL PLACE TO VACATION. MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS BEING RECOGNIZED AS *THE* PLACE TO INVEST AND TO RELOCATE BUSINESSES TO OR EXPAND EXISTING OPERATIONS IN...

IN SHORT, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS, FOLKS.

AS I MENTIONED, a BIG PART OF OUR WORK HAS BEEN TO MODERNIZE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE.

OUR SEAPORT - PORTMIAMI - ALSO KNOWN AS THE "CRUISE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD" HAD A \$27 BILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT ON OUR LOCAL ECONOMY IN 2014, AND OVER 200,000 JOBS WERE EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY SUPPORTED BY IT.

AND THIS SUMMER, PORTMIAMI WILL BE "BIG SHIP READY" ONCE OUR DREDGING PROJECT IS COMPLETED.

THIS IS IMPORTANT - PORTMIAMI WILL BE THE ONLY MAJOR LOGISTICS HUB SOUTH OF VIRGINIA CAPABLE OF HANDLING FULLY LADEN POST-PANAMAX VESSELS.

ONCE THE PANAMA CANAL EXPANSION IS COMPLETED NEXT YEAR, THOSE SHIPS SHOULD BE HEADED TO MIAMI. THIS WILL CREATE JOBS AND ATTRACT INVESTMENTS IN MIAMI-DADE AND IT IS A RESULT OF A P3 AND A COMMITMENT TO INVESTING IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE.

THE DREDGE IS NOT THE ONLY ENHANCEMENT WE HAVE MADE AT PORTMIAMI.

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION OF CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS ARE TRANSFORMING OUR PORT.

ALREADY IN PLACE IS A NEW ON-DOCK INTERMODAL RAIL SERVICE LINKING PORTMIAMI TO 70 PERCENT OF THE U.S. POPULATION IN FOUR DAYS OR LESS; AS WELL AS A NEW TUNNEL LINKING THE PORT DIRECTLY TO THE UNITED STATES INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM.

ALL OF THAT MEANS MORE TRADE AND LOGISTICS JOBS FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND MORE PROSPERITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HAS HAD HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS IN INFRASTRUCTURE WORK DONE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS and MILLIONS MORE WILL BE INVESTED INTO OUR TOP ECONOMIC ENGINE IN THE COMING YEARS.

AND IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW, 96 PERCENT OF OUR VISITORS WHO JUMP ON A CRUISE SHIP AT PORTMIAMI FIRST COME THROUGH MIA.

BUT OUR WORK IS NOT SOLELY FOCUSED ON OUR TOP TWO ECONOMIC ENGINES.

WE MAY NOT BE "TECH BEACH" JUST YET, BUT WE ARE ACTIVELY WORKING TOWARDS BECOMING THAT BECAUSE THE DIVERSIFICATION OF OUR ECONOMY IS KEY TO OUR FUTURE.

I'M SURE MANY OF YOU AGREE.

I BELIEVE THAT BY POSITIONING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AS AN EMERGING LEADER IN TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION, NOT ONLY ARE WE INCREASING THE INTERACTION AND PARTICIPATION OF OUR RESIDENTS, BUT WE ARE ALSO CREATING A BETTER FUTURE.

LAST YEAR FOR EXAMPLE, MICROSOFT OPENED THE FIRST MICROSOFT INNOVATION CENTER IN THE UNITED STATES AT VENTURE HIVE IN DOWNTOWN MIAMI.

AND WE ARE PROUD TO SAY THAT THE M-I-C HAS BROUGHT TOGETHER INNOVATORS ALONG WITH STUDENTS AND OTHERS TO ACCELERATE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES AND CREATE THE TECH JOBS OF TOMORROW.

INVESTORS ARE TAKING NOTICE OF THE TECH AND INNOVATION IN OUR COMMUNITY. APPROXIMATELY \$655 MILLION IN VENTURE CAPITAL INVESTMENT CAME THROUGH MIAMI-DADE OVER THE LAST YEAR. THAT HAS HELPED JUMP START BUSINESSES AND CREATE OR SUPPORT OVER A THOUSAND JOBS HERE. THESE INVESTMENTS AND THE LAUNCH OF EMERGE AMERICA'S HAS SOLIDIFIED OUR PLACE ON THE TECH AND INNOVATION MAP.

EMERGE WELCOMED APPROXIMATELY 10,000 ATTENDEES A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO AND ITS PRESENCE IN MIAMI-DADE WILL RESULT IN MORE INVESTMENTS IN THIS GROWING SECTOR OF OUR ECONOMY.

WHILE ALL THIS IS A TESTAMENT TO THE RESILIENCE AND FORWARD-THINKING NATURE OF OUR COMMUNITY, MY ADMINISTRATION HAS ALSO WORKED TO CLOSE THE SKILLS GAP SO THAT OUR PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS CAN ALSO HIRE OUR RESIDENTS ON THEIR JOB SITES AND IN THEIR COMPANIES.

EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE WAS LAUNCHED IN DECEMBER.

NEARLY 1,000 PARTICIPANTS HAVE EITHER BEEN A PART OF ITS TRAINING PROGRAMS OR ARE CURRENTLY IN CLASSES. HUNDREDS HAVE SECURED EMPLOYMENT AS A RESULT OF IT.

ONE GRADUATE RECENTLY SPOKE WITH MY DEPUTY MAYOR RUSSELL BENFORD. HE SAID HE SECURED HIS FIRST JOB THROUGH THE EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE PROGRAM AND IS NOW ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR HIS FAMILY.

THAT PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED IF OUR ADMINISTRATION HAD NOT PARTNERED WITH ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS FLORIDA EAST COAST CHAPTER, THE NEIGHBORS AND NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION AND CAREERSOURCE SOUTH FLORIDA TO LAUNCH EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE.

BUT THAT IS WHAT SETS US APART.

IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, WE ATTACK OUR PROBLEMS TOGETHER - THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ARE VIEWED AS PARTNERS OF OUR GOVERNMENT, NOT COMPETITORS.

I INVITE YOU TO REVIEW OUR PROGRESS IN THE

EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE PROGRAM BY VISITING MY WEBPAGE AND CLICKING ON THE EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE TAB.

IN CLOSING, THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER INITIATIVES AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS I COULD HIGHLIGHT, BUT THERE ISN'T ENOUGH TIME.

MY GOAL HERE IS TO LEAVE YOU ALL WITH A CLEAR MESSAGE -- YOU HAVE A PARTNER AT COUNTY HALL.

I'M HERE TO LISTEN. TO WORK TOGETHER WITH ALL OF YOU SO THAT WE CONTINUE OUR WORK TO MAKE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY THE BEST IT CAN BE.

I WANT TO REITERATE THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS NOT ONLY A WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY WITH GREAT WEATHER, ENDLESS CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT OFFERINGS, BUT THAT WE ARE MOVING TOGETHER TOWARDS A BRIGHT FUTURE AND HAVE A LOT TO BE EXCITED ABOUT!

AS MAYOR AND ON BEHALF OF OUR 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS, I THANK YOU FOR CONDUCTING THIS IMPORTANT DISCUSSION AND FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR BEING HERE!

CONGRATULATIONS TO INVEST MIAMI! WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU!

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

