

**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION, FELLOW ELECTED OFFICIALS AND FELLOW RESIDENTS...GOOD AFTERNOON AND THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING TODAY.**

**AS IS THE CASE EVERY YEAR, TODAY'S MEETING IS IMPORTANT FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S FUTURE BECAUSE IT PROVIDES OUR LEADERS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN WHAT THEY BELIEVE SHOULD BE PRIORITIES FOR THE 2016 STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION.**

**BUT I DO THINK THAT THIS YEAR WILL BE ESPECIALLY CRITICAL FOR OUR FUTURE. THAT'S BECAUSE OUR COUNTY HAS REACHED A POINT IN ITS DEVELOPMENT WHERE WE NEED ADDITIONAL STATE SUPPORT TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS.**

**ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE HEARD SEVERAL ELECTED OFFICIALS SPEAK HERE THIS MORNING, AS MAYOR OF THE MOST-POPULOUS COUNTY IN OUR STATE, I COME TO YOU WITH CONCERNS THAT AFFECT OUR ENTIRE COUNTY -- ALL 34 MUNICIPALITIES AND ALL 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS.**

**FIRST, I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT OUR DELEGATION MUST PRIORITIZE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING.**

**I KNOW MOST OF YOU TRAVEL ON OUR HIGHWAYS AND HAVE EXPERIENCED THE GRIDLOCK. IT IS**

**FRUSTRATING AND DIMINISHING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE.**

**IN JUST FIVE YEARS, THE U.S. CENSUS ESTIMATES OUR COUNTY HAS ADDED APPROXIMATELY 200,000 RESIDENTS. AND, THE GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU REPORTED THAT APPROXIMATELY 15 MILLION VISITORS HAVE STAYED AT LEAST ONE NIGHT IN OUR COMMUNITY IN 2015 ALONE.**

**WHILE THAT IS WONDERFUL NEWS AND WE WELCOME THEM ALL TO OUR WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY, THEIR PRESENCE HAS FURTHER STRAINED MIAMI-DADE INFRASTRUCTURE.**

**MY ADMINISTRATION HAS TAKEN STEPS TO REFOCUS OUR EFFORTS ON TRANSPORTATION.**

**IN JULY, I NAMED FORMER FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OFFICIAL ALICE BRAVO TO SERVE AS OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF MIAMI-DADE TRANSIT.**

**UNDER HER LEADERSHIP, WE HAVE INVESTED MORE DOLLARS AND RESOURCES IN OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND EMPHASIZED THAT OUR METRORAIL, METROMOVER AND METRO BUSES MUST BE CLEAN, SAFE AND RELIABLE.**

**WE WILL ALSO BE FINALIZING THE MERGING OF OUR TRANSIT AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENTS TO BETTER ADDRESS AND COORDINATE OUR COLLECTIVE COUNTYWIDE EFFORTS.**

**AND THAT IS IMPORTANT. *BETTER COORDINATION.* MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION, TO PUT IT SIMPLY, THERE HAVE BEEN TOO MANY COOKS IN THE KITCHEN TRYING TO COORDINATE OUR TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY WORK.**

**SOME OF THE ENTITIES INVOLVED ARE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, MIAMI-DADE EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY, THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION AND OUR BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS. EACH HAVE A VITAL ROLE TO PLAY, BUT UP UNTIL ALICE'S APPOINTMENT, MIAMI-DADE HAS NOT HAD ONE INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS BEEN EMPOWERED TO COORDINATE ALL EFFORTS, INCLUDING PLANNING, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION.**

**I LOOK FORWARD TO BETTER COORDINATION AS WE ADDRESS OUR TRANSIT AND MOBILITY CONCERNS...**

**THE COUNTY IS ALSO PREPARING TO ANNOUNCE NEW EXPRESS BUS ROUTES THAT ARE LESS EXPENSIVE THAN EXPANDING EXISTING METRORAIL AND CAN BE DONE MUCH FASTER.**

**ON THAT POINT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WILL NOT BE LOOKING TO EXPAND METRORAIL. THE COSTS ARE ASTRONOMICAL -- BETWEEN \$100 MILLION AND \$250 MILLION PER MILE, DEPENDING ON THE ROUTE -- AND IT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG TO COMPLETE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE METRORAIL ORANGE LINE EXPANSION FROM DOWNTOWN MIAMI TO MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TOOK OVER A DECADE TO COMPLETE AT A COST OF \$506 MILLION FOR THE 2.4-MILE LINE.**

**TOO LONG AND TOO EXPENSIVE. OUR RESIDENTS NEED RELIEF FASTER.**

**CLEAN, SAFE, RELIABLE EXPRESS BUSES CAN BE DEPLOYED FASTER AND CHEAPER TO GET MORE CARS OFF THE ROAD AND IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCES OUR RIDERS HAVE, AND THAT IS WHAT WE INTEND TO DO. BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP ACQUIRING RIGHT OF WAYS ON STATE HIGHWAYS. THAT WILL PROVIDE US WITH THE LANES NECESSARY FOR THE EXPRESS BUSES TO OPERATE.**

**I DISCUSSED THIS WITH TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY JIM BOXOLD EARLIER THIS WEEK IN MY OFFICE AND HE WAS VERY RECEPTIVE.**

**OTHER PROJECTS I REQUESTED IMMEDIATE STATE ASSISTANCE ON BECAUSE OF THEIR CRITICAL**



**IMPORTANCE FOR OUR COUNTY'S FUTURE INCLUDE BAY LINK -- A LIGHT-RAIL SYSTEM CONNECTING THE CITIES OF MIAMI BEACH AND MIAMI -- AND AN EAST-WEST RAIL CORRIDOR. BOTH WILL ALLEVIATE CONGESTION ON OUR ROADS AND CAUSEWAYS IF COMPLETED.**

**BAY LINK HAS BEEN A PROJECT LONG PROMISED BUT NEVER DELIVERED. AS WAS THE CASE WITH THE \$700 MILLION PORTMIAMI TUNNEL WHERE THE STATE AND COUNTY JOINTLY FUNDED ITS CONSTRUCTION, WE NEED TALLAHASSEE'S SUPPORT FOR BAY LINK.**

**I REQUESTED THAT SECRETARY BOXOLD ALSO ASSIST US WITH THE ACQUISITION OF EXISTING C.S.X. LINES. COUNTY COMMISSIONER ESTEBAN BOVO, A FORMER MEMBER OF OUR STATE DELEGATION, HAS CHAMPIONED THE ACQUISITION SO THE COUNTY CAN EVENTUALLY RUN AN EAST-WEST LINE ON THE RAIL TO ALLEVIATE TRAFFIC TO OUR HEAVILY-POPULATED WESTERN SUBURBS.**

**I SUPPORT THIS EFFORT AND AM REQUESTING YOUR ASSISTANCE.**

**I AM NOT ONLY HERE TO ASK FOR YOUR HELP. THE COUNTY HAS DONE ITS PART TO PREPARE FOR OUR FUTURE. IN FACT, MIAMI-DADE WILL HAVE FUNDING**

**AVAILABLE FOR FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS.**

**A REVIEW CONDUCTED BY MY ADMINISTRATION EARLIER THIS YEAR OF THE HALF-PENNY SURTAX REVEALED THAT APPROXIMATELY \$2 BILLION WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PROJECTS OVER THE NEXT 30 YEARS.**

**I MENTION THAT BECAUSE IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO KNOW THAT, LIKE THE AFOREMENTIONED PORT TUNNEL PROJECT, AND THE RECENTLY COMPLETED DEEP DREDGE WORK THAT MAKES PORTMIAMI THE ONLY PORT SOUTH OF VIRGINIA TO BE READY FOR THE LARGER SHIPS COMING THROUGH THE WIDENED PANAMA CANAL, THE STATE AND COUNTY HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF WORKING *TOGETHER* TO MODERNIZE INFRASTRUCTURE.**

***MIAMI-DADE WILL BE READY TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT MAJOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS, BUT AS THE TOP ECONOMIC GENERATOR IN OUR STATE, WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT. WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER BEFORE -- LET'S KEEP IT GOING!***

**IN ADDITION, AS WE POSITION MIAMI-DADE AS A GLOBAL CENTER FOR ARTS AND CULTURE, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO INCENTIVIZE THE FILM, TELEVISION AND ENTERTAINMENT**

**INDUSTRY TO FURTHER ENHANCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION IN THE AREA.**

**MIAMI-DADE IS ALSO IN NEED OF SUPPORT TO BUILD MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING. LIVING IN THE BEST COUNTY IN THE COUNTRY DOES COME AT A COST, UNFORTUNATELY. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE CAN'T WORK WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO BUILD MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGHOUT OUR COMMUNITY. IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS.**

**AS MIAMI-DADE PREPARES TO TAKE LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO REGULATE UBER AND APP-BASED MOBILITY OPTIONS, THE COUNTY NEEDS GUIDANCE FROM THE STATE ON HOW TO ADDRESS INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR UBER DRIVERS.**

**I'VE MENTIONED BEFORE -- UBER IS PART OF OUR TRANSIT AND MOBILITY SOLUTIONS. IT IS 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY AND OUR RESIDENTS WANT IT. SO DO I, BUT YOUR ASSISTANCE ON INSURANCE QUESTIONS WILL BE APPRECIATED...**

**I ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN THESE AREAS.**

**FINALLY, AS YOU MAY KNOW, I HAVE BEEN AN ADVOCATE OF BODY-WORN CAMERAS FOR POLICE OFFICERS. I APPRECIATE THE SUPPORT OF THE DELEGATION IN PREPARING BODY-CAMERA POLICY.**

**I KNOW THAT IS CRITICAL TO 21ST CENTURY POLICING IN MIAMI-DADE.**

**I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU KNOW THAT OUR BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HAS ALSO SUPPORTED CAMERAS. COMMISSIONERS APPROVED ALLOCATING UP TO \$5 MILLION FOR BODY-WORN CAMERAS FOR OFFICERS IN THE MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.**

**THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HAS ALSO RECENTLY AWARDED THE COUNTY A \$1-MILLION GRANT TO PURCHASE 500 MORE CAMERAS.**

**THAT IS ALL GOOD NEWS AND YOUR SUPPORT CONTRIBUTED TO IT.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND I LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING THE MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT SET THE STANDARD FOR DEPARTMENTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.**

**IN CLOSING, I WANT TO REITERATE THAT I AM COMMITTED TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH EACH OF YOU DURING THIS UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE SESSION TO ADVANCE OUR COUNTY PRIORITIES AND ENSURE THAT OUR COMMUNITY'S INTERESTS ARE HEARD AND ACTED ON IN TALLAHASSEE.**

**WE HAVE DONE OUR PART HERE.**



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS EMERGED FROM THE RECESSION AS THE LEADING JOB CREATOR IN THE STATE. GOVERNOR SCOTT MENTIONED THAT MIAMI-DADE HAS ADDED APPROXIMATELY 115,000 PRIVATE-SECTOR JOBS SINCE JULY 2011, MORE THAN ANY OF OUR 66 OTHER COUNTIES...**

**WE HAVE SAVED COUNTY TAXPAYERS \$1 BILLION IN PROPERTY TAXES SINCE JULY 2011, WHICH REPRESENTS A SAVINGS OF \$1,000 FOR THE AVERAGE HOMEOWNER OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS.**

**AND OUR COUNTY HAS NOT RAISED TAXES TO FILL FINANCIAL HOLES. WE SACRIFICED AND DID MORE WITH LESS. AND BECAUSE OF THOSE SACRIFICES, I BELIEVE BETTER DAYS ARE AHEAD...**

**BUT WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE DELEGATION.**

**YOU CAN CONTINUE TO COUNT ON YOUR MAYOR FOR WHATEVER BACKING YOU REQUIRE!**

**THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU ALL DO ON BEHALF OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!**

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