

GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE.

FIREFIGHTER FAYED, THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTRODUCTION.

LET ME BEGIN BY EXPRESSING MY GRATITUDE TO RETIRED CHIEF MIKE OPALKA FOR DELIVERING SUCH A TOUCHING INVOCATION...AND TO DR. DENISE VIDAL FOR THAT BEAUTIFUL RENDITION OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM.

I'D ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE MEMBERS OF THE MIAMI-DADE FIRE RESCUE HONOR GUARD FOR PRESENTING THE COLORS.

COMMISSIONERS, CHIEF DOWNEY, UNION PRESIDENT BLANCO ... THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE WITH ME THIS MORNING AS WE REMEMBER THE SACRIFICE MADE BY OUR BRAVE FIREFIGHTERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, I BEGAN MY CAREER AS A FIREFIGHTER. AND I HAD THE HONOR OF SERVING AS FIRE CHIEF TO THE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE CITY OF MIAMI FIRE DEPARTMENT.

DURING MY 25 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, I WAS ALWAYS STRUCK BY THE

LEVEL OF SERVICE, DEDICATION AND SHEER HEROISM SHOWN BY OUR FIREFIGHTERS.

BY GATHERING HERE TODAY, WE RECOGNIZE THE HARSH REALITY THAT FIREFIGHTERS FACE EVERY DAY.

AND WHEN WE LOOK AT THIS DISPLAY, LET'S ALL REMEMBER THAT EACH OF THESE NAMES REPRESENTS REAL MEN AND WOMEN ... WITH FAMILIES WHO GRIEVE THEIR LOSS ... AND A COMMUNITY THAT IS FOREVER GRATEFUL FOR THEIR SACRIFICE, BRAVERY AND COMMITMENT.

ALL OF THE NAMES DISPLAYED HERE BEFORE US ALSO REPRESENT A LONG HISTORY OF PLACING SERVICE AND DUTY ABOVE SELF ... INCLUDING MAKING THE GREATEST POSSIBLE SACRIFICE: LIFE ITSELF.

TODAY, WE SALUTE ALL THE MIAMI-DADE FIRE RESCUE FIREFIGHTERS WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES SO THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE. AND WE ALSO COMMEMORATE THE NAMES OF LIEUTENANT GRANT S. PORTER AND FIREFIGHTER GREGORY L. HARRIS TO THE MIAMI-DADE FIRE RESCUE MEMORIAL WALL.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN THANKING LIEUTENANT PORTER AND FIREFIGHTER HARRIS FOR THEIR SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY. LET'S ALWAYS REMEMBER THEM, AND HONOR THEIR LIVES, NOT JUST DURING "FIREFIGHTER MEMORIAL MONTH," BUT EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR.

MAY GOD BLESS THEM AND THEIR FAMILIES.

THANK YOU.

