

WASHINGTON WEEKLY REPORT JANUARY 13 – JANUARY 17, 2014

(The following is an overview of D.C. activities concerning Miami-Dade County, the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, the County's Congressional Delegation & the Administration)

THE SENATE WAS IN SESSION

THE HOUSE WAS IN SESSION

FY14 FEDERAL FUNDING BILL PASSED BY CONGRESS INCLUDES MAJOR VICTORIES FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY & FLORIDA: ADDITIONAL CBP RESOURCES FOR MIA, DEEP DREDGE FIX FOR PORTMIAMI, AMONG OTHERS

This week Congress approved the FY14 Omnibus Appropriations bill: a \$1.1 trillion measure that will fund the federal government through September 30, 2014. The bill passed the House passed by a vote of 359-67 and cleared the Senate by a 72-26 vote last night. It will become law with the president's signature.

Of significance to the County was the inclusion of additional resources and programs to increase CBP staffing and resources which will be of tremendous benefit to MIA and the region's travel industry. In addition to the CBP resources, a technical fix for the PortMiami deep dredge project will allow for the project to continue as planned and remain on track for completion in preparation for the eventual expansion of the Panama Canal.

Mayor Gimenez, Chairwoman Sosa, the Board of County Commissioners, MIA Director Emilio Gonzalez, PortMiami Director Bill Johnson, Greater Miami Convention and Visitor's Bureau President Bill Talbert, OIA, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, the County's Federal Contract Lobbyists and a variety of local, state, federal and international stakeholders have been advocating on behalf of these priorities for years.

Upon passage of this bill, the County and its partners are extremely grateful for the strong state support provided by Gov. Rick Scott, the leadership of the County's congressional delegation, specifically key appropriations committee members Reps. Diaz-Balart and Wasserman Schultz, along with each member of the County's House and Senate congressional delegation and officials at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection and the White House Office of Management and Budget.

Some of the provisions benefitting Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida:

PortMiami

- A provision amending the original authorized amount for the PortMiami Deep Dredge project, allowing the dredging to move forward with more certainty and without potential delay;
- The entire amount budgeted for Operations & Maintenance funding for PortMiami/Miami Harbor in the amount of \$4.35 million;

Miami International Airport

- The bill provides \$10.58 billion in appropriations for CBP, \$715 million above fiscal year 2013 post sequestration level. This funding will allow for the highest operational force levels in history –21,370 Border Patrol agents, sustaining the increased levels approved in the fiscal year 2010 Border Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, sustaining 21,775 CBP officers currently working at our 329 ports of entry today, and funds 2,000 new CBP officers to be hired through fiscal year 2015. These additional CBP officers will expedite the processing of tourists and trade vital to the U.S. economy;
- The bill adds \$90.6 million above the budget request for Air and Marine operations and procurement of critical assets to defend our borders, including enhanced radar for unmanned aircraft systems. This increase will restore the 29 percent cut to flight hours proposed in the budget, restoring critical counterdrug, alien smuggling and disaster response missions;
- The bill adds \$10 million above the budget request for trusted traveler programs such as additional Global Entry kiosks, more mobile document readers, expanding the integrated traveler process, and expanding activities at existing preclearance locations, as well as for border transformation programs;
- The bill also includes provisions to require CBP to better address wait times and staffing, and to work with private industry stakeholders to improve travel and trade efficiency:
- Specifically, on pg. 705 of the bill: ***“Not later than 240 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall develop and implement operational work plans to meet the goals of subsection (a) at 20 United States air, land, and sea ports with the highest passenger volume and longest wait times. In developing such plans, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall consult with appropriate stakeholders, including, but not limited to, airlines and airport operators, port authorities, and importers.”***

General County & Florida-related Priorities

- \$75 million for Shore Protection projects, including beach renourishment;

- \$46 million for Everglades restoration;
- Additional \$20 million in one-time funding to APHIS for efforts of the multi-agency coordination involving the citrus industry to combat spread and eventual eradication of citrus greening ("Citrus Trust Fund");
- \$7.5 million for the second phase of the Tamiami Trail bridge project;
- Delay of certain national flood insurance program rate increases;
- Fully funding the much needed improvements to aging Herbert Hoover Dike;
- \$92 million in IRS funding is set aside to improve taxpayer services and address refund fraud, identity theft, and overseas compliance;
- \$5 million for the Florida Headwaters for land acquisitions;
- \$67 million for Missing and Exploited Children Program, including funding for the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces;
- Funding for the ICE Child Exploitation Investigations Unit (CEIU);
- \$30 million for Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) research for competitive grant funding for institutions such as The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis;
- \$1 million for swimming pool safety grant program;

Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart released the following statement after passage of the FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.

"I am pleased to support legislation that will fund the government for the remainder of the 2014 fiscal year. It's no secret that Washington has a problem with out of control spending, but this bill is a sign of the continued commitment to changing the culture of spending in our nation's capitol. The House majority has successfully led the way in cutting more than \$165 billion in discretionary spending since 2011, and this is the 4th consecutive year that we've achieved spending reductions. This bill focuses on funding priorities in every part of the federal government, while staying within the budgetary constraints."

"I especially want to commend the full committee chairman -- Mr. Rogers, and my subcommittee chairs -- Ms. Granger, Mr. Crenshaw, Mr. Culberson, and their staffs, for working tirelessly on producing a final product on such a tight timeframe."

Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz issued the following statement on the approved legislation:

"This legislation begins to reverse some of the devastating cuts caused by sequestration," said Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz. "It ensures that we avoid the nightmare scenario of another government shutdown. And most importantly, it invests in strengthening our middle class, by funding programs in areas such as education, scientific research and infrastructure. These investments will help create jobs and boost our economy."

"As Ranking Member of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee, I am thrilled that this bill sets the stage for regular order in our appropriations process. I am especially pleased that this bill includes two critically important initiatives which work to combat the threat and dangers of one of the deadliest diseases - cancer. The bill includes nearly \$5 million in continued funding for the "Breast Cancer Awareness for Young Women," or EARLY Act programming, at the Centers for Disease Control. As a young breast cancer survivor diagnosed at 41, I know all too well how important it is for women to know the risks early on and get the health care they need. The bill also includes report language calling on the Defense Department to establish a research-oriented task force to study metastasized cancer of all types. With better understanding of the causes, mechanisms and treatments of metastatic cancer, we can save or extend the lives of thousands of people. While this is not a perfect bill, it provides key investments while setting us on the right track in 2014."

Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson issued the following statement the bill's passage:

"Since arriving in Congress, I have been a strong defender of Social Security, Medicare, education funding, and effective public investments that create jobs and opportunity. This bill is a step in the right direction because it ends many of the savage and ill-conceived cuts under sequestration. The bill increases education funding—including fully-funding Head Start and \$250 million in grants to expand preschool programs—and will result in new job-creating investments in research and infrastructure. The bill also includes language to delay certain flood insurance premium increases that would impact Florida homeowners. As a lifelong educator and a sponsor of legislation to end sequestration, invest in job-creation, and address the flood insurance crisis, I was very pleased to see the inclusion of these provisions in the bill."

But the bill is not perfect. It fails to extend emergency unemployment insurance and uphold Congress's moral obligation to millions who have been locked out of the job market. This is unconscionable at a time when there are more than three unemployed people for every job opening in America. Congress must also go much further if it is to save all Florida homeowners from serious flood insurance increases—this is why I sponsored the Homeowners Defense Act and recently wrote to Speaker Boehner to demand a more expansive fix to the flood insurance crisis."

While I am pleased to see Congress moving beyond the foolish gridlock that resulted in last year's shutdown, I am committed to winning relief for America's unemployed and returning Congress to a serious job-creation agenda."

Below are some additional provisions of interest to the County.

Early Childhood Education Programs

Head Start: The bill includes \$8.6 billion for Head Start, a 1.025 billion increased over FY2013. The omnibus also includes language that restores funding for current grantees to their pre-sequester FY2012 level and allows for an approximately 1.3 percent cost of living increase.

Child Care: The bill includes \$2.36 billion, a \$154 million increase over FY2013, for Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG).

Preschool Development Grants: The bill provides \$250 million for a new program to support States' efforts to expand or create high-quality pre-school systems for 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families.

Promise Neighborhoods: The bill provides \$59.8 million for the program, which provides grants to support cradle-to-career services designed to improve educational outcomes for students in distressed neighborhoods.

Law Enforcement

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Programs: The final bill includes \$214 million for COPS, including \$180 million for COPS Hiring Grants. While the final amount is less than the Senate proposed, the House bill zeroed out funding for the program. The final amount \$4 million more than the FY2013 post-sequester level.

Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (JAG): The omnibus includes \$376 million for Byrne JAG, which an \$11 million increase over the FY2013 post-sequester level.

Coverdell Forensic Science Grants: The omnibus includes \$12 million for these grants, the same as the FY2013 enacted level. The Senate bill had proposed an increase to \$15 million for the account, but the House bill provided no funding.

DNA Analysis Grants: The final bill includes \$125 million for these grants, the same amount proposed by the House and Senate, which is a \$2 million increase over the FY2013 enacted level.

State Criminal Alien Assistance Programs (SCAAP): The omnibus includes \$180 million for SCAAP, which provides federal payments to state and local governments for the costs of incarcerating undocumented aliens. The final amount is more than the House proposed level of \$165 million and the President's budget, which proposed eliminating the program. However, the final amount is less than Senate proposed level of \$190 million for SCAAP and the FY2013 enacted level of \$250 million.

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Programs: The omnibus includes \$254.5 million for these grants, which is less than the FY2013 enacted level of \$273.7 million and the Senate proposed level of \$279, but significantly more than the House level of \$196 million.

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Grants: The bill includes \$417 million for Violence Against Women Prevention and Prosecution Programs. This is the same as the Senate proposed level, which is a \$4 million increase over the House level and \$9 million more than the FY2013 enacted level.

Victims of Trafficking Grants: The omnibus includes \$14.25 million for these grants, which is an increase over the FY2013 enacted level of \$13 million.

Bulletproof Vest grants: The omnibus includes \$22.5 million, which is an increase over the FY2013 enacted level of \$21.1 million. It is the same as the Senate proposed level. The House bill did not include new funding for these grants, same as the President's budget request.

Homeland Security & FEMA Funding

FEMA State and Local Programs:

The omnibus bill provides \$1.5 billion for State and Local Programs, same as the House and Senate bills. This amount is \$100 million above the comparable FY2013 post-sequestration level.

The final bill, like the Senate bill, specifies the amount for the individual grant programs. The House bill had proposed to distribute the funds according to "threat, vulnerability, and consequence", at the discretion of the DHS Secretary among the various grant programs.

The final bill also does not include the grant reform proposal, known as the National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP), included in the President's budget request.

Included in the total for State and Local Programs is:

State Homeland Security Grant Program: The omnibus includes \$466.4 million (above the FY2013 enacted level of \$346.1 million) for SHSGP. Of this amount, \$55 million is provided for Operation Stonegarden.

Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI): The bill provides \$600 million (above the FY2013 enacted level of \$499.7 million) for UASI. Of this amount, \$13 million is provided for non-profit organizations at high risk of a terrorist attack.

Firefighters Assistance Grants: The bill provides \$680 million for these grants (\$340 million for SAFER, \$340 million for AFG). This is above the FY2013 enacted level of \$675 million and the President's request of \$670 million.

Port Security Grants: The Senate bill provides \$100 million (above the FY2013 enacted level of \$97.4 million) for port security grants.

Public Transportation Security Assistance, Railroad Security Assistance and Over-the Road Bus Security Assistance: The bill provides \$100 million (above the FY2013 enacted level of \$97.4 million) for these grants. Of this amount, \$10 million is provided for Amtrak Security.

Education, Training, and Exercises: The bill provides \$233.7 million these programs.

Emergency Management Performance Grants: The bill provides \$350 million for EMPG. This is the same as the FY2013 enacted level.

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants: The bill provides \$25 million for these grants. The same as the Senate level, but above the House level of \$22.5 million. The President's budget proposed to eliminate these grants.

FEMA Disaster Relief: The bill provides \$6.22 million, same as the President's budget request.

Emergency Food and Shelter Program: The bill provides \$120 million, same as the FY2013 enacted level, but more than the President's budget request of \$100 million.

Health and Human Services

Community Health Centers: The bill includes \$3.64 billion for CHCs, a \$695 million increase, to provide comprehensive, quality health care services to medically underserved communities and vulnerable populations. This includes \$350 million to create over 450 new CHCs and expand clinical services at existing health centers.

Community Services Block Grant: The bill includes \$674 million for this program, an increase from the FY2013 level of \$635 million and a substantial increase from the President's FY2014 budget request of \$350 million.

Prevention and Public Health Fund: The bill includes \$923 million for the PPHF, which was created by the Affordable Care Act. This is a \$26 million decrease from the FY2013 level.

HIV/AIDS Programs: The bill includes \$2.3 billion, a \$70 million increase, to provide HIV-related services. This includes \$900 million for AIDS Drug Assistance program (ADAP), a \$38 million increase, to provide additional patients with access to HIV medications.

Senior Nutrition Programs: The bill includes \$815 million for senior nutrition programs, which provides congregate meals and meals on wheels to needy seniors. This \$46.3 million increase and replaces the sequester cuts imposed on the program in FY2013.

Workforce

Job Training: The bill includes \$2.6 billion, an increase of \$121 million, for Workforce Investment Act Grants to States to provide job training skills and assistance to low-skilled adults, dislocated workers, and low-income youth with barriers to employment.

Veteran Employment and Training: The bill includes \$270 million (increase of \$19 million) to expand employment services to transitioning service members, veterans with disabilities, and their spouses and caregivers.

(Compiled by the Federal Lobbying Teams & OIA)

If there are any additional questions on any areas of the bill please contact OIA.

WASTE-TO-ENERGY PLANT MACT STANDARDS AMONG ISSUES RAISED IN MEETING WITH EPA ADMINISTRATOR MCCARTHY

This week the U.S. Conference of Mayors organized a meeting with EPA Administrator, Gina McCarthy to discuss several issues of importance to participating communities. At issue for Miami-Dade is the County's Waste-to-Energy plant.

A proposed EPA regulation that is required under the Clean Air Act of 1990 is the point of concern for the Miami-Dade Public Works and Waste Management Department. Under the Act, EPA is required to develop Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) Standards for a variety of industry facilities, including Municipal Waste Combustor (MWC) MACT Standards, which would have a direct impact on a facility located within Miami-Dade County.

This facility, Covanta Dade Renewable Energy, began commercial operations in 1982 and serves the municipal waste disposal needs of the County, while generating power for residents. The facility processes 3,000 tons of municipal solid waste per day and 1,200 tons-per-day of biomass fuel, generating 77 megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity from two 38.5 MW turbine generators. Approximately 26,000 tons of ferrous (steel) metal and 2,000 tons of non-ferrous (tin, copper) metal are recovered and recycled by the facility each year.

Over the past five years, EPA has promulgated MACT rules for Medical Waste Incinerators, Utilities, Industrial Boilers and Cement manufacturers. Generally, the time period from initial release of draft rules to final promulgation is one year or less. The window for compliance is typically three years.

This issue was raised in the meeting with the Administrator who indicated they have heard from many communities who have expressed concerns over the potential rules.

For over a year now, Covanta, Public Works and Waste Management and OIA have been engaging in discussions with federal officials and key members of the House and Senate, along with the County's congressional delegation to help ensure that the rule is not drafted in a manner that would have a negative impact on Miami-Dade County's facility. Participating in the meeting on behalf of Miami-Dade County were Patton Boggs, the Federal Contract Lobbyists.

REP. JOE GARCIA PUSHES FOR PERMANENT FUNDING FOR COUNTIES INCLUDING MIAMI-DADE & MONROE

On Thursday, Representatives Joe Garcia, Ann Kirkpatrick (AZ), and Jared Polis (CO), introduced legislation to permanently authorize the Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) program, which was not included in the FY14 Omnibus Funding bill. The PILT program issues federal payments to local governments to help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable federal land within their jurisdictions. PILT payments help rural counties carry out vital services like firefighting, law enforcement and construction of public schools and roads.

"Counties like Monroe County in my district rely on PILT funding to grow their local economy, support education, and provide for public health and safety," said Representative Garcia. "Congress has a responsibility to these counties, which is why I am proud to cosponsor legislation today that will permanently fund the PILT program."

Overall, almost 2,000 counties in 49 states depend on the annual federal PILT disbursement of approximately \$450 million. Currently, both Miami-Dade and Monroe County receive a portion of this disbursement. PILT funding was extended for one year in the transportation bill conference report through fiscal year 2013. Mandatory PILT funding is set to expire in June 2014.

SEN. NELSON WORKS TO FIX FLORIDA'S NEW UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS SYSTEM

Federal labor officials intend to head to Florida by the end of this week to help fix continuing problems plaguing Florida's new unemployment benefits system.

"The secretary of labor has assured me his key staff that handle unemployment insurance will be in Tallahassee by the end of the week; and, they'll stay there until the problems are fixed," Sen. Bill Nelson said in a statement in response to a number of media inquiries.

Senator Nelson sought more direct intervention by federal authorities in the wake of media reports that thousands of Floridians have been unable to collect unemployment benefits they are due since the launch of the state's new multi-million dollar website in mid-October.

According to one recent study done by the National Employment Law Project, unemployed Floridians may have been denied more than \$22 million in benefits in October and November of last year while the problems continue.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez spoke with Nelson, as a follow-up to the lawmaker's recent written request for federal action. Perez conveyed that the initial purpose of his team's trip will be to try to institute a way to pay those with continuing claims now and fix problems with the Florida system later, Nelson said.

People who have continuing claims have already been deemed eligible to receive initial unemployment benefits, but for some their benefits have reportedly been delayed or interrupted when issues with the state's new website made it impossible for them to meet their continuing requirements by showing they are available for work, actively seeking work, and have not turned down any suitable work offers.

Nelson said he believes Perez will have a progress report perhaps as early as next week.

REP. JOE GARCIA INTRODUCES FLOOD INSURANCE MITIGATION BILL

Yesterday, Congressman Joe Garcia introduced the HOME Act of 2014 – legislation aimed at addressing the harmful effects of Biggert-Waters by delaying skyrocketing flood insurance rates, demanding FEMA conduct an affordability study, and creating a long-term solution by emphasizing the importance of mitigation.

"The impact of Biggert-Waters upon South Florida has been alarming and unacceptable. I have had constituents see their insurance premiums jump from \$2,000 to \$49,000. I am introducing this bill because there needs to be a way to protect our

hardworking families, communities, and local industries from carrying the burden of these outrageous rate increases” said Garcia.

The bill would place a five year delay on rate increases across the board. The legislation also creates long-term solutions to the National Flood Insurance Program’s (NFIP) underlying issues by incentivizing mitigation measures.

Earlier this week, the Omnibus spending bill included an amendment sponsored by Garcia that delays certain rate increases through the end of FY2014. *“We must continue to fight until home and business owners everywhere have been released of the exorbitant burden placed upon them by these insurance increases,”* Garcia said.

South Florida Reps. Hastings, Wilson, Frankel and Murphy have signed on as cosponsors to the HOME Act.

MAYOR GIMENEZ WELCOMES OVER 30 FOREIGN AMBASSADORS TO MIAMI

This week Mayor Gimenez welcomed over 30 ambassadors to the United States from around the globe to Miami to discuss economic issues and trade opportunities in the county. Part of the trip included a briefing at PortMiami to discuss the Deep Dredge Project and the implications for Panama Canal expansion in 2015. In related activity, OIA worked with Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen’s office to arrange meetings for the U.S. Ambassador to Brazil at MIA and PortMiami.

The visit was organized by the U.S. State Department as part of their “Experience America” initiative. *Experience America* seeks to build relationships, encourage business investment and trade, provide a forum for dialogue, and create opportunities for interchange between Chiefs of Diplomatic Missions and American leaders in a wide array of fields. Similar missions have taken place around the country.

The diplomats also met with Miami business leaders and participated in events hosted by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, and visits to the University of Miami Life Science and Technology Park, Miami Children Hospital’s Telehealth Center, NAP of the Americas and the International Hurricane Research Center’s “wall of wind,” at FIU, where building materials are tested for hurricane strength. (Source: *Miami Herald*)

REPS. ROS-LEHTINEN & DIAZ-BALART COMMENT ON AMERICAN CELEBRITY USED AS PROPAGANDA BY BRUTAL DICTATORSHIP

Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, and Congressman Albio Sires (D-NJ) released the following statement after another American celebrity is used as propaganda by a brutal dictatorship:

“Dennis Rodman was rightly criticized for failing to acknowledge the unjust imprisonment of a U.S. citizen and numerous political prisoners and serving as a

propaganda prop and apologist to the totalitarian dictatorship in North Korea. Similarly, last April, Shawn Carter ('Jay-Z') traveled to Cuba, a state sponsor of terrorism, and did not call for the release of U.S. citizen Alan Gross, who has been imprisoned since December 2009. Furthermore, Jay-Z did not show any regard for fellow rapper Angel Yunier Remon Arzuaga ('El Critico de Arte'), a pro-democracy activist who has been languishing in poor health in a Cuban prison since March 2013. In November, when El Critico was near death in prison, my colleagues and I wrote a letter asking Jay-Z to say something which may have helped him. We have yet to receive a response to this letter." said Congressman Diaz-Balart.

"I urge celebrities such as Rodman, Jay-Z and Beyonce to speak out for those who wish to express themselves freely yet are unable to do so because they live under dictatorships. In Cuba, artists continue to be jailed and their right to freedom of speech is impaired due to the tyrannical regime. Where is the international solidarity for these frustrated artists? Jay-Z and Beyonce should use their fame to ensure others can make contributions to sports, music and the arts and enjoy the same freedoms that we treasure in our nation. The presence and engagement of Rodman, Jay-Z and Beyonce with these repressive regimes only provides a gilded patina to decrepit tyrants instead of concentrating on helping those who are oppressed," said Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen.

"Freedom of expression and assembly without reprisal are amongst the liberties that can be most taken for granted by individuals that exercise them freely – be they artists, authors, or players of sport. They are also amongst the basic rights and liberties unknown and denied to the Cuban people by the Castro dictatorial regime. It is unfortunate that any conscionable person with the rights to these freedoms can turn a blind eye when facing outright repression and disregard for basic human rights," said Congressman Sires.

FIU PRESIDENT AT WHITE HOUSE TO DISCUSS STRATEGIES TO EXPAND COLLEGE OPPORTUNITIES

FIU President Mark Rosenberg joined a delegation of education and workforce stakeholders at the White House on Thursday for a daylong event focused on boosting the academic success of low-income students. The meeting was hosted by President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.

"We are honored to participate in such a critical discussion with President Obama on what we can do –and are already doing–to ensure low-income students not only enter college but graduate on time and go on to high-paying jobs in their fields," Rosenberg said. *"At FIU, we are committed to being a solutions center for the local and global community and improving access to higher education is a challenge we are ready to meet."*

Through a partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, FIU has made a commitment to help increase high school graduation rates and provide every qualified M-DCPS student with access to higher education. The initiative's flagship program, The Education Effect, is now in its third year at Miami Northwestern High School. Funded by an initial \$1 million donation from JPMorgan Chase, it has helped Miami Northwestern achieve its first-ever "A" grade; increase graduation rates to nearly 80 percent; boost the number of students accepted to post-secondary education by 10 percent; and quadruple the number of students accepted to FIU.

FIU plans to replicate the success of The Education Effect, at Booker T. Washington High School in Overtown.

"Working with Superintendent Alberto Carvalho's team at M-DCPS and with the generous support of private partners, we are committed to making a difference in the lives of students," Rosenberg said. "We hope this model can be adopted and incentivized in other urban environments because it works."

REP. WILSON TO LEAD MLK NON-VIOLENCE FORUM WITH MIAMI-DADE JUVENILE SERVICES, VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE & 5000 ROLEMODELS

Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson, in conjunction with the Miami-Dade County Juvenile Services Department, local activists, the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project will hold a community-wide discussion about South Florida's growing crisis of violent crime.

In advance of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday, Congresswoman Wilson will seek to honor the legacy of the civil rights hero and champion of nonviolence by leading a session to explore diverse and viable solutions to the region's epidemic of gun violence and other violent crime.

The Congresswoman will be joined by actor Charles "Roc" Dutton from the hit TV series "Roc," actress JoMarie Payton from the hit TV series "Family Matters," and international recording artist Betty Wright, whose 21-year-old son Patrick Parker was killed by gun violence.

The parents of several other victims of violent crime – including 12 year old Tequila Forshee, and 26 year old Eviton Brown - will participate in the discussion taking place at the Joseph Caleb Auditorium.

"Twenty years ago, when I was a Miami-Dade County School Board Member, the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project hosted the same type of forum, at the same place, with the same guest speaker – actor Charles Dutton - under the same circumstances. It is disheartening and frightening, that two decades later, we are still dealing with same issue."

How many more of our children, teenagers and young adults have to die because of senseless violence? We must come together as a community to find solutions,” said Congresswoman Wilson.

The event will take place on Sunday, January 19, 2014 at 3:00p.m at Joseph Caleb Auditorium, 5400 NW 22nd Avenue Miami, FL.

SEN. RUBIO APPEARS ON “FACE THE NATION”

Last Sunday, Senator Marco Rubio appeared on CBS News’ “Face the Nation” hosted by Bob Schieffer, to discuss Opportunity Equality.

To view the interview, please use the following link: <http://youtu.be/1lIBQF3-GIk>

NBA CHAMPION MIAMI HEAT VISIT THE WHITE HOUSE

On Tuesday January 14th, the reigning NBA Champion Miami Heat visited the White House. President Obama hosted the Heat organization, their family members, Wounded Warriors, federal, state and local elected officials, among many others in the East Room to commemorate their back-to-back championships won in 2012 and 2013.

LOOKING AHEAD

January 20 – January 24, 2014:

- The House will not be in session
- The Senate will not be in session

January 28, 2014

- The President’s State of the Union address to a joint session of the United States Congress

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