

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(21)


TO: Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: January 20, 2016

FROM: Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution urging the U.S.
Congress and the U.S.
Department of Agriculture, as
well as the Florida Legislature
and the Florida Department
of Agriculture and Consumer
Services, to provide financial
relief to farmers impacted by
historic rainfalls in South
Florida during December 2015

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Daniella Levine Cava.


Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

APW/jls



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(Revised)

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Please note any items checked.

- "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- Budget required
- Statement of fiscal impact required
- Statement of social equity required
- Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- No committee review
- Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's _____, 3/5's _____, unanimous _____) to approve
- Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(21)
1-20-16

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION URGING THE U.S. CONGRESS AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AS WELL AS THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE AND THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES, TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL RELIEF TO FARMERS IMPACTED BY HISTORIC RAINFALLS IN SOUTH FLORIDA DURING DECEMBER 2015

WHEREAS, December 2015 was one of the wettest on record for South Florida, with more than 8 inches of rain falling in just the first two weeks of the month, and some areas receiving significantly more; and

WHEREAS, farmlands in southwest Miami-Dade County and in and around Homestead were particularly impacted, with some areas having received up to 15 inches of rain in a 48-hour period, much more than water management systems can handle at any one time; and

WHEREAS, even weeks after the heavy rains subsided, some farms remained underwater despite nonstop pumping, with high tides continuing to flood fields twice a day; and

WHEREAS, the County's more than 80,000 acres of farmland supply much of the winter vegetables east of the Mississippi River and, according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, amounted to sales of about \$592 million; and

WHEREAS, according to *The Miami Herald*, many farmers growing beans, tomatoes, squash, and other fruits and vegetables reported losing between 40 and 100 percent of their crops in early December due to heavy rains and the resultant flooding of their farmlands; and

WHEREAS, farmlands in the County remain susceptible to even further impacts from rain and flooding, as this winter is predicted to bring above average rainfall due to a strong El Niño in the Pacific Ocean, which is expected to last through the spring; and

WHEREAS, consequently, there is a pressing need for federal and state relief to help compensate farmers who have lost much, if not all, of their crops to rain and flooding; and

WHEREAS, the Dade County Farm Bureau has called upon state officials to declare a state of emergency due to the significant crop loss caused by the heavy rains and flooding in early December; and

WHEREAS, Adam Putnam, Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture, has expressed an intention for the state to work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture on assessing the damage and providing growers with as much assistance as possible; and

WHEREAS, this Board now wishes to call upon the federal government and the State of Florida to provide appropriate financial assistance to farmers in need,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:

Section 1. Urges the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as well as the Florida Legislature and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, to provide financial relief to farmers impacted by historic rainfalls in South Florida during December 2015.

Section 2. Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit certified copies of this resolution to the members of the Florida Congressional Delegation, the U.S. Senate President, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, the Governor, the Florida Senate President, the Florida House Speaker, the Chair and Members of the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation, and the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture.

Section 3. Directs the County's federal and state lobbyists to advocate for the appropriation described in Section 1 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to include this item in the 2016 Federal Legislature Package when it is presented to the Board and to amend the 2016 State Legislative Package to include this item.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Daniella Levine Cava. It was offered by Commissioner _____, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Jean Monestime, Chairman	
Esteban L. Bovo, Jr., Vice Chairman	
Bruno A. Barreiro	Daniella Levine Cava
Jose "Pepe" Diaz	Audrey M. Edmonson
Sally A. Heyman	Barbara J. Jordan
Dennis C. Moss	Rebeca Sosa
Sen. Javier D. Souto	Xavier L. Suarez
Juan C. Zapata	

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 20th day of January, 2016. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this Resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.



James Eddie Kirtley