

## MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(26)

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**TO:** Honorable Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** May 5, 2020

**FROM:** Abigail Price-Williams  
County Attorney

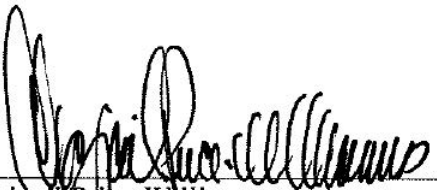
**SUBJECT:** Resolution urging  
Governor Ron DeSantis  
and the Florida Department  
of Economic Opportunity to  
resolve issues with Florida's  
unemployment system and  
expand eligibility for and  
amount of unemployment  
assistance in the wake of  
coronavirus disease 2019  
(COVID-19)

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Resolution No. R-438-20

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

  
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Abigail Price-Williams  
County Attorney

APW/smm



**MEMORANDUM**  
(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson  
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**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item No. 11(A)(26)

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 present \_\_\_\_, 2/3 membership \_\_\_\_, 3/5's \_\_\_\_, unanimous \_\_\_\_, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, or CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c)(2) \_\_\_\_) 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)(26)

5-5-20

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ R-438-20

RESOLUTION URGING GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS AND THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY TO RESOLVE ISSUES WITH FLORIDA'S UNEMPLOYMENT SYSTEM AND EXPAND ELIGIBILITY FOR AND AMOUNT OF UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE IN THE WAKE OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

**WHEREAS**, a new coronavirus, known as SARS-CoV-2, causes an infectious disease named coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) that has spread rapidly since its initial identification in Wuhan, Hubei province, China; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization (“WHO”) declared the outbreak a “public health emergency of international concern”; and

**WHEREAS**, businesses and government offices are continuing to announce new closures daily to ensure the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare as a result of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the effects of this public health emergency, including business closures, have resulted in a massive and rapid increase in the number of individuals who are seeking unemployment assistance; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity is responsible for administering Florida’s unemployment assistance program; and

**WHEREAS**, multiple sources now report that the website for applications for unemployment assistance has been plagued by issues which are preventing individuals from applying for unemployment benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Executive Director Ken Lawson recently apologized for the problems that applicants were encountering on the website; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida’s unemployment benefits are among the lowest in the nation, paying a maximum of \$275 a week; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida currently offers unemployment benefits for a maximum of 12 weeks, while many other states offer unemployment benefits for up to 26 weeks; and

**WHEREAS**, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act has been passed by Congress and signed into law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act provides for emergency administration grants to states as part of the “Emergency Unemployment Insurance Stabilization and Access Act of 2020”; and

**WHEREAS**, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act conditions half of this funding upon a state demonstrating “steps it has taken or will take to ease eligibility requirements and access to unemployment compensation for claimants, including waiving work search requirements and the waiting week”; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity has announced that, at the direction of Governor Ron DeSantis, it has waived the waiting week requirement through May 8, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES ACT”) has been passed by Congress and signed into law; and

**WHEREAS**, the CARES Act provides for federal unemployment benefits in addition to those provided by state law; and

**WHEREAS**, the CARES Act provides for unemployment assistance for a duration of up to 39 weeks; and

**WHEREAS**, the CARES Act further provides for an additional \$600 per week as “Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation”; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board is concerned about the impact the COVID-19 emergency has had and is continuing to have on unemployment in Miami-Dade County; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board wishes to ensure that all who need access to Florida’s unemployment benefits are able to apply for and access those benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board wishes to ensure that applicants for Florida’s unemployment benefits are able to receive the benefits for which they qualify not from the date that their application is complete, but from the date of loss of employment; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board further wishes to ensure that Floridians are given unemployment benefits that are comparable to those offered by other states,

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

**Section 1.** Urges Governor Ron DeSantis and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity to resolve all ongoing issues with Florida’s unemployment assistance program, including, but not limited to, fixing issues with the website, hiring additional staff to handle higher call volume, and allowing for applicants to be remotely assisted by qualified nonprofit organizations, so that individuals are able to apply for and access unemployment benefits.

**Section 2.** Urges Governor DeSantis to expand unemployment benefits in Florida by:

- waiving the one-week waiting period beyond May 8, 2020;
- increasing the number of weeks that applicants are eligible for assistance from 12 weeks to 39 weeks;

- increasing the maximum weekly benefit to \$600 per week, to match the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation provided for in the CARES Act; and
- allowing applicants to self-report the date they initiated (or attempted to initiate) their application and use that date for the purposes of paying benefits.

**Section 3.** Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Governor, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Executive Director Ken Lawson, and the Chair and Members of the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation.

**Section 4.** Directs the County’s state lobbyists to advocate for the actions set forth in sections 1 and 2 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to amend the 2020 State Legislative Package to include this item.

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

	Audrey M. Edmonson, Chairwoman	<b>aye</b>
	Rebeca Sosa, Vice Chairwoman	<b>aye</b>
Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.	<b>absent</b>	Daniella Levine Cava <b>aye</b>
Jose “Pepe” Diaz	<b>aye</b>	Sally A. Heyman <b>aye</b>
Eileen Higgins	<b>aye</b>	Barbara J. Jordan <b>aye</b>
Joe A. Martinez	<b>aye</b>	Jean Monestime <b>aye</b>
Dennis C. Moss	<b>aye</b>	Sen. Javier D. Souto <b>aye</b>
Xavier L. Suarez	<b>aye</b>	

