

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(8)

TO: Honorable Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: September 4, 2024

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution urging President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., United States Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, and the United States Congress to: (1) act swiftly and impose significant sanctions on the Maduro regime for its actions undermining democracy, and (2) demand transparency and international oversight in future elections in Venezuela

Resolution No. R-773-24

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Vice Chairman Anthony Rodríguez.


Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

GBK/jp



MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

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Gen Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

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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 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)(8)
9-4-24

RESOLUTION NO. R-773-24

RESOLUTION URGING PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE ANTONY J. BLINKEN, AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO: (1) ACT SWIFTLY AND IMPOSE SIGNIFICANT SANCTIONS ON THE MADURO REGIME FOR ITS ACTIONS UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY, AND (2) DEMAND TRANSPARENCY AND INTERNATIONAL OVERSIGHT IN FUTURE ELECTIONS IN VENEZUELA

WHEREAS, numerous residents of Miami-Dade County (the “County”) immigrated to the United States from Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, many of those same residents were forced to flee the oppressive regime that is currently ruling Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, a great deal of County residents have family members that are still living in Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Hugo Chávez was elected president of Venezuela, ushering in an era of government in Venezuela that continues to this day; and

WHEREAS, as the Chávez regime’s rule continued, it became increasingly repressive and anti-democratic; and

WHEREAS, upon the death of Chávez in 2013, Nicolás Maduro ascended to power as the regime’s new leader in Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, Maduro—a member of the United Socialist Party—was declared the winner of Venezuela’s April 14, 2013 presidential election, allegedly garnering a slim majority with 50.6 percent of votes cast in support of Maduro; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, Venezuela’s political opposition has highlighted widespread incidents of potential election fraud, voter intimidation, and other abuses by the Venezuelan government in support of Nicolás Maduro’s candidacy; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Human Rights Council has condemned the Maduro regime for human rights abuses including brutal policing practices, extrajudicial killings, lack of judicial independence, and harassment of human rights defenders and independent media; and

WHEREAS, the political tension in Venezuela reached a boiling point in the lead-up to the 2024 presidential election; and

WHEREAS, for example, in June 2023, leading opposition candidate María Corina Machado was barred from participating in the 2024 presidential election due to her association with Juan Guaidó and her involvement in his challenge to the legitimacy of the Maduro regime; and

WHEREAS, just before the 2024 election, Maduro warned of a “bloodbath” if he lost the election; and

WHEREAS, the 2024 Venezuelan election was rife with irregularities, and is possibly the greatest incident of voter fraud in recent Latin American history; and

WHEREAS, the government-controlled National Electoral Council (CNE) announced fraudulent results claiming a narrow Maduro victory on July 29, 2024; and

WHEREAS, several nations and world leaders have declared opposition candidate Edmundo González as the rightful winner of the 2024 presidential election in Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of the Maduro regime’s announcement of falsified election results, the Venezuelan people began to protest nationwide; and

WHEREAS, the Venezuelan government has once again shown its total disregard for the free speech rights of its citizens in its response to the protests; and

WHEREAS, the Venezuelan government has responded to protests with acts of repression and human rights violations, imprisoning individuals who are doing nothing more than exercising their right to free speech; and

WHEREAS, the Biden administration previously eased sanctions on Venezuela after the Venezuelan government agreed with opposition leaders to hold elections this year; and

WHEREAS, the Venezuelan government has failed to hold a free and fair election; and

WHEREAS, this Board believes that the United States government should employ all available diplomatic options to address the repressive and illegitimate regime in Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, this Board has repeatedly taken steps to condemn the actions of the Maduro regime while supporting diplomatic efforts to promote democracy, human rights, and freedom; and

WHEREAS, this Board recognizes the suffering that the Maduro regime has caused countless Venezuelans and County residents to endure; and

WHEREAS, this Board wishes to support the struggle of the Venezuelan people seeking free and fair elections,

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

Section 1. Urges President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., United States Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, and the United States Congress to: (1) act swiftly and impose significant sanctions on the Maduro regime for its actions undermining democracy, and (2) demand transparency and international oversight in future elections in Venezuela.

Section 2. Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., United States Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer, House Speaker James M. Johnson, and the Members of the Florida Congressional Delegation.

Section 3. Directs the County’s federal lobbyists to advocate for the action described in section 1 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to amend the 2024 Federal Legislative Package to include this item.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Vice Chairman Anthony Rodríguez. It was offered by Commissioner **Marleine Bastien** , who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Raquel A. Regalado** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

	Oliver G. Gilbert, III, Chairman	aye	
	Anthony Rodríguez, Vice Chairman	aye	
Marleine Bastien	aye	Juan Carlos Bermudez	aye
Kevin Marino Cabrera	aye	Sen. René García	aye
Roberto J. Gonzalez	aye	Keon Hardemon	aye
Danielle Cohen Higgins	aye	Eileen Higgins	aye
Kionne L. McGhee	aye	Raquel A. Regalado	aye
Micky Steinberg	aye		

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 4th day of September, 2024. 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

JUAN FERNANDEZ-BARQUIN, CLERK

By: Basia Pruna
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CJF", written over a horizontal line.

Christian J. Fernandez-Andes