

MEMORANDUM

Amended
Agenda Item No. 11(A)(19)

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: January 22, 2025

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution condemning the prior presidential administration's removal of Cuba from the State Department's list of sponsors of terrorism, easing of sanctions on companies run by Cuba's military, and suspension of the Helms-Burton Act's provisions granting a cause of action to individuals who had property confiscated by the Cuban government; and commending President Donald J. Trump and Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio for revoking the previous administration's recent harmful actions with respect to Cuba

Resolution No. R-83-25

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Co-Prime Sponsors Commissioner Juan Carlos Bermudez and Chairman Anthony Rodriguez and Co-Sponsors are Commissioner Kevin Marino Cabrera, Senator René García and Commissioner Roberto J. Gonzalez.



Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

GBK/gh



MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: January 22, 2025

FROM: 
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 ____, majority plus one ____, 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) ____, 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 _____

Amended
Agenda Item No. 11(A)(19)
1-22-25

RESOLUTION NO. **R-83-25**

RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE PRIOR PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION'S REMOVAL OF CUBA FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S LIST OF SPONSORS OF TERRORISM, EASING OF SANCTIONS ON COMPANIES RUN BY CUBA'S MILITARY, AND SUSPENSION OF THE HELMS-BURTON ACT'S PROVISIONS GRANTING A CAUSE OF ACTION TO INDIVIDUALS WHO HAD PROPERTY CONFISCATED BY THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT; AND COMMENDING PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP AND SECRETARY OF STATE MARCO A. RUBIO FOR REVOKING THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION'S RECENT HARMFUL ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO CUBA

WHEREAS, for more than half a century, the Cuban people have suffered under an authoritarian Communist regime that has systematically denied the Cuban people their most basic human rights and fundamental freedoms; and

WHEREAS, thousands of residents of Miami-Dade County (the "County") either immigrated to South Florida from Cuba or have family members currently living there; and

WHEREAS, many of the Cuban-American residents of the County are refugees that fled the repressive regime currently governing Cuba; and

WHEREAS, in recent history, the Cuban government has engaged in troubling actions amounting to either terrorism or support thereof, as well as strategic support of several of the United States' adversaries; and

WHEREAS, on February 24, 1996, two unarmed civilian planes operated by Brothers to the Rescue, a Miami-based activist nonprofit organization that seeks to assist and rescue raft refugees emigrating from Cuba, were shot down by the Cuban Air Force while flying in international air space, killing Armando Alejandro, Jr., Carlos Costa, Mario de la Peña, and Pablo Morales; and

WHEREAS, three of the victims were U.S. citizens, and the other had obtained permanent resident status; and

WHEREAS, the Organization of American States (“OAS”) previously reported that no warning was given before the two civilian planes were shot down; and

WHEREAS, on May 7, 1999, a federal indictment was handed down in the Southern District of Florida charging 14 individuals, some of them Cuban spies, with a well-planned conspiracy to shoot down the Brothers to the Rescue planes; and

WHEREAS, in addition, the Cuban government has steadfastly supported the Maduro regime in Venezuela, which is responsible for thousands of extrajudicial killings, declared victory in the 2024 election by means of massive election fraud, and whose leader was charged in a Southern District of New York federal indictment for narco-terrorism, conspiracy to import cocaine, possession of machine guns and destructive devices, and conspiracy to possess machine guns and destructive devices in violation of Title 21 U.S.C. §§ 960a and 963, and 18 U.S.C. § 924; and

WHEREAS, in early 2021, the Trump Administration re-added Cuba to the State Department’s list of sponsors of terrorism for, among other things, providing safe harbor to members of the National Liberation Army (ELN), a Colombian guerilla group which is on the State Department’s list of Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of State at the time, Mike Pompeo, cited Cuba's refusal to extradite ELN leaders after a deadly bombing at a police academy in Bogotá in 2019 as a reason for the addition of Cuba to the sponsors of terrorism list; and

WHEREAS, Cuba is one of a handful of nations that has maintained friendly relations with the Russian Federation after its invasion of Ukraine; and

WHEREAS, it has been reported by the Associated Press and the Wall Street Journal that Cuba has allowed China to operate a spy base on its island, which is used as an electronic eavesdropping station to monitor United States telecommunications, since as early as 2019; and

WHEREAS, despite the Cuban government's troubling recent history and actions, on January 14, 2025, the President of the United States removed Cuba from the State Department's list of countries that sponsor terrorism; and

WHEREAS, the prior presidential administration also lifted sanctions on companies run by Cuba's military and suspended certain provisions of the Helms-Burton Act that allow Cuban-Americans to seek compensation for confiscated property on the island; and

WHEREAS, the recent actions by the prior presidential administration are an affront to the Cuban-American community and other communities affected by the nefarious actions of the Cuban Communist regime; and

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2025, President Donald J. Trump issued an Executive Order that, among other things, revoked the prior presidential administration's above-mentioned actions with respect to Cuba; and

WHEREAS, this Board remains unwavering in its support of the Cuban people's struggle for freedom,

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

Section 1. Condemns the prior presidential administration's removal of Cuba from the State Department's list of sponsors of terrorism, easing of sanctions on companies run by Cuba's military, and suspension of the Helms-Burton Act's provisions granting a cause of action to individuals who had property confiscated by the Cuban government.

Section 2. Commends President Donald J. Trump and Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio for revoking the previous administration's recent harmful actions with respect to Cuba.

Section 3. Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to President Donald J. Trump, United States Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio, United States Senate Majority Leader John R. Thune, United States House Speaker James M. Johnson, and the Chair and Members of the Florida Congressional Delegation.

The Co-Prime Sponsors of the foregoing resolution are Commissioner Juan Carlos Bermudez and Chairman Anthony Rodriguez and the Co-Sponsors are Commissioner Kevin Marino Cabrera, Senator René García and Commissioner Roberto J. Gonzalez. It was offered by Commissioner **Juan Carlos Bermudez** , who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Oliver G. Gilbert, III** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

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

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 22nd day of January, 2025. 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