

GUILLERMO, THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTRODUCTION...AND THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO BE HERE WITH ALL OF YOU.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DEAR FRIENDS...

FOR CLOSE TO 40 YEARS, YOUR EFFORTS HAVE HELPED BUILD THE MIAMI OF TODAY...

THE INCREDIBLE GROWTH AND PROSPERITY THAT WE SEE ALL AROUND US IS MADE POSSIBLE BY ORGANIZATIONS LIKE YOURS...

AND FROM THE HARD WORK AND DEDICATION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN IN THIS ROOM...

FOR THAT, I THANK YOU.

THIS AFTERNOON I WANT TO BRIEFLY SHARE WITH YOU SOME THOUGHTS ON THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY...

AND HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE OUR OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH.

ALL OF US KNOW THAT WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF MOBILE CAPITAL AND RESOURCES...

QUITE FRANKLY, PEOPLE CAN LIVE, INVEST, AND WORK ANYWHERE NOWADAYS.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMPETES NOT ONLY WITH CITIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, BUT WITH PLACES FROM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

OUR SUCCESS DEPENDS ON OUR WILLINGNESS TO CREATE A WORLD-CLASS ECONOMIC CLIMATE OF ATTRACTION...

WHERE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY IN OUR COMMUNITY.

THIS IS WHY MY ADMINISTRATION IS COMMITTED TO INVESTING IN THE THINGS THAT ADD VALUE TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OUR PEOPLE.

IT'S NO SECRET THAT OUR URBAN CORE HAS BECOME ONE OF THE HOTTEST REAL ESTATE MARKETS IN THE WORLD...

AND THAT GROWTH HAS SPREAD TO DORAL, CORAL GABLES, AND OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTY.

THE COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE MARKET HAS PRODUCED MORE THAN 1 MILLION NEW SQUARE FEET DELIVERED YEAR-TO-DATE...

WITH INCREASING OCCUPANCY AND DEMAND FOR HIGH END LIVING, RETAIL, AND OFFICE SPACE.

THE CRANES THAT ONCE DOTTED OUR LANDSCAPE AND THEN DISAPPEARED FOR A WHILE ARE NOW BACK.

THINK ABOUT IT, MOST OF THE BUILDINGS IN DOWNTOWN MIAMI WERE NOT THERE 10 YEARS AGO.

NOW, TOGETHER WITH BRICKELL, THE URBAN CORE HAS DEVELOPED INTO A RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR.

AND EVEN MORE BUILDINGS ARE PLANNED AND GOING UP.

OUR SKYLINE, WHICH NOW COMPETES WITH NEW YORK AND CHICAGO IN NATIONAL RANKINGS, WILL CONTINUE TO EVOLVE.

THIS GROWTH AND COUNTLESS PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY, ALLOWS THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TO CONTINUE GROWING STEADILY...

ALLOWING FOR JOB CREATION NUMBERS THAT ARE APPROACHING PRE-RECESSION NUMBERS.

SPEAKING OF JOB CREATION, FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES, WE NEED TO HAVE THE WORKERS TO FILL THOSE JOBS...

ESPECIALLY IN KEY SKILLED AREAS.

THIS IS WHY WE'RE SUPPORTING EDUCATING AND RETAINING THE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN THAT WILL MAKE UP THE WELL TRAINED WORKFORCE THAT WILL CONTINUE TO CARRY OUR COUNTY FORWARD.

MY ADMINISTRATION IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS WELL AS ALL OF OUR LOCAL UNIVERSITIES TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

ONE AREA WHERE WE'VE WORKED WITH THESE INSTITUTIONS IS IN CREATING INTERNSHIPS TO BETTER PREPARE OUR STUDENTS TO ENTER THE WORK-FORCE AFTER HAVING LEARNED REAL LIFE SKILLS.

THIS INCLUDES A SPECIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM CREATED BY MY ADMINISTRATION - THE MAYOR'S EXECUTIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM...

WE TAKE 30 TOP SENIOR AND GRADUATE STUDENTS FROM FIU AND POSITION THEM TO WORK SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH OUR DEPUTY MAYORS AND DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS.

DURING THIS INTERNSHIP, STUDENTS LEARN A VARIETY OF SKILLS, PUTTING TO USE THEIR CLASSROOM KNOWLEDGE, AND DEVELOP THE EXPERIENCE THEY CAN THEN USE FOR LATER JOBS.

WE ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF EXPANDING THIS SPECIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM TO OTHER LOCAL UNIVERSITIES BEYOND FIU.

THIS PROGRAM HAS BECOME SO SUCCESSFUL IT'S NOW BEING REVIEWED BY UNIVERSITIES IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY TO REPLICATE AS A MODEL FOR THEM TO FOLLOW.

IT'S ONE STEP TOWARD ENDING THE BRAIN DRAIN WHERE OUR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN TAKE THEIR SKILLS TO OTHER CITIES.

WE NEED TO KEEP THIS HOME GROWN TALENT HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

ANOTHER AREA WHERE WE'RE MAKING GREAT GAINS IS OUR CONTINUED EXPANSION IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE...

FOR THE FIRST 6 MONTHS OF LAST YEAR, THE VALUE OF TOTAL TRADE THROUGH THE COUNTY REACHED \$47 BILLION.

THIS IS WHY IT MAKES SENSE TO INVEST IN OUR TWO LARGEST ECONOMIC ENGINES - OUR AIR AND SEA PORT.

WE'VE MADE MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR AIRPORT SO THAT IT'S EASIER FOR EVERYONE TO TRAVEL IN AND OUT OF MIAMI.

IN FACT, MIA HAD OVER 40 MILLION PASSENGERS IN 2013, MAKING IT ONE OF THE BUSIEST AIRPORTS IN THE NATION.

WE'VE ALSO MADE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS TO PORT MIAMI, A LEADER IN CRUISE AND CARGO TRAFFIC.

PORT MIAMI WILL SOON BECOME ONE OF THE FEW PORTS ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD CAPABLE OF

SERVICING THE NEW LARGER SHIPS THAT WILL NOW CROSS THE WIDENED PANAMA CANAL...

THIS ENSURES THAT WE REMAIN COMPETITIVE FOR DECADES TO COME.

MAKING THESE INVESTMENTS IN OUR TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC DRIVERS ALSO ALLOWS US TO SEEK WAYS TO EXPAND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES INTO NEW SECTORS.

IN TODAY'S WORLD, WE CANNOT CONTINUE TO RELY ON OUTDATED MODELS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THAT FOCUS ON ONE OR TWO INDUSTRIES IN ISOLATION.

INSTEAD, WE ARE UNLEASHING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT OF OUR COMMUNITY BY SUPPORTING START-UP INCUBATORS AND OTHER TECHNOLOGY BASED BUSINESSES.

THIS COMING MAY, WE WILL HOST MAYORS AND BUSINESS PEOPLE FROM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD FOR THE EMERGE AMERICAS CONFERENCE.

THIS IS A SUMMIT THAT WILL GATHER THE BRIGHTEST INNOVATORS IN TECHNOLOGY TO

CONTINUE POSITIONING MIAMI AS A LEADER IN TECHNOLOGY.

THROUGH THESE EFFORTS, WE ARE ALL WORKING TODAY TO BE THE PLACE THAT CREATES THE JOBS OF TOMORROW.

FINALLY, WE ARE DOING ALL THIS WHILE REDUCING WASTE AND THE SIZE OF GOVERNMENT, LOWERING THE TAX BURDEN ON OUR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.

OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS WE'VE REDUCED THE NUMBER OF COUNTY EMPLOYEES BY 9% AND OUR OPERATING BUDGET BY 8%.

BY THE WAY, THIS INCLUDES A 26% REDUCTION IN THE BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR.

WE'VE DONE THIS WHILE MAINTAINING, AND IN SOME AREAS EVEN IMPROVING, THE LEVEL OF SERVICES WE'RE PROVIDING TO OUR RESIDENTS.

I'M PROUD TO SAY THAT ONE OF THESE SERVICES INCLUDES STREAMLINING OUR OPERATIONS AND PERMITTING PROCESSES...

SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF TIME IT TAKES FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS TO BEGIN AND BE COMPLETED.

IN EVERYTHING WE DO, OUR COMMON GOAL IS TO CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RESIDENTS.

BUT WE CANNOT DO ANY OF THIS ALONE.

I'VE SAID BEFORE THAT GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CREATE JOBS...

WE CREATE THE ENVIRONMENT WHERE JOBS CAN GROW AND PROSPER.

AND THAT'S WHERE ALL OF YOU COME IN.

WE NEED YOUR HELP...

AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE NEED YOUR ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP IN HELPING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY GROW AND PROSPER.

MY OFFICE IS ALWAYS OPEN TO NEW IDEAS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE OUT THERE EVERY DAY CREATING AND SUPPORTING JOBS IN OUR COMMUNITY.

IF THERE IS ANY WAY WE CAN MAKE YOUR WORK EASIER - WHETHER IT'S PERMITTING, CUTTING RED-TAPE, OR ANYTHING ELSE -- LET US KNOW.

IN MY OFFICE, ALL OF YOU HAVE A PARTNER IN COUNTY HALL.

LET ME THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN...

AND I ENCOURAGE YOU TO WORK WITH US TO CONTINUE MAKING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY A PREMIERE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

