

GOOD AFTERNOON.

CONGRESSWOMAN ROS-LEHTINEN, CHAIRWOMAN SOSA AND DIRECTOR GONZALEZ, IT'S A PLEASURE TO JOIN YOU HERE AT MIA THIS AFTERNOON.

OUR AIRPORT HAS LONG BEEN KNOWN AS THE GATEWAY OF THE AMERICAS...

BUT MIA IS SO MUCH MORE THAN THAT.

WITH EACH NEW INTERNATIONAL DESTINATION AND EACH NEW INTERNATIONAL CARRIER, MIA IS CEMENTING ITS PLACE AS A TRULY GLOBAL GATEWAY.

AND THAT'S FITTING, BECAUSE OUR COMMUNITY IS WELL ON ITS WAY TO JOINING THE RANKS OF THE WORLD'S GREAT CITIES:

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS QUICKLY BECOMING A HUB FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TECH-BASED VENTURES, AND A CENTER FOR ART AND THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE LONGTIME ANCHORS OF OUR ECONOMY - TOURISM, FINANCE AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE - ARE THRIVING.

WITH ALL OF THAT POSITIVE MOMENTUM ON OUR SIDE, WE NEED TO ENSURE THAT WE PROPERLY WELCOME OUR MILLIONS OF INTERNATIONAL VISITORS WHO ARRIVE HERE AT MIA.

THAT MEANS PROVIDING ADEQUATE CBP STAFFING LEVELS IN OUR FEDERAL INSPECTION AREAS TO PROCESS THE THOUSANDS OF VISITORS AND RESIDENTS WHO ENTER THE UNITED STATES THROUGH MIA EACH DAY.

WITHOUT QUESTION, OUR FEDERAL PARTNERS AT CBP HAVE A CRITICAL JOB TO DO:

ENSURING THAT OUR BORDERS – AND OUR NATION – ARE SECURE.

IT'S A HUGE RESPONSIBILITY, AND OUR CBP OFFICERS HERE AT MIA ARE DOING THEIR VERY BEST EVERY DAY TO CARRY OUT THEIR MISSION.

HOWEVER, WITH THE MASSIVE GROWTH IN INTERNATIONAL PASSENGERS THAT MIA HAS SEEN OVER THE PAST 6 YEARS, THEY NEED HELP.

SO OUR MESSAGE TODAY IS SIMPLE AND CLEAR:

MIA NEEDS MORE CBP OFFICERS TO HANDLE THE HUGE NUMBERS OF INTERNATIONAL PASSENGERS WHO ARE ARRIVING HERE.

WE VALUE OUR GUESTS – THEY ARE THE VISITORS WHO SUPPORT OUR TOURISM INDUSTRY;

THE MOTIVATED INVESTORS WHO ARE ADDING NEW DIMENSIONS TO OUR LOCAL ECONOMY;

AND THEY ARE THE NEW RESIDENTS WHO SEEK OUT A FRESH START IN OUR COMMUNITY.

WE MUST ROLL OUT THE WELCOME MAT FOR THEM AND TREAT THEM JUST AS WE WOULD WANT TO BE TREATED.

SO I JOIN CONGRESSWOMAN ROS-LEHTINEN, CHAIRWOMAN SOSA AND DIRECTOR GONZALEZ IN CALLING ON OUR FEDERAL PARTNERS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. TO SEND US MORE CBP OFFICERS.

MIA IS OUR COMMUNITY'S TOP ECONOMIC ENGINE, AND WE NEED TO KEEP IT IN GOOD WORKING ORDER IF OUR COMMUNITY IS TO CONTINUE ALONG THE PATH TO PROSPERITY.

THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH.

AND NOW SOME WORDS IN SPANISH:

BUENAS TARDES A TODOS.

NUESTRO AEROPUERTO ES LA PUERTA A LAS AMERICAS Y LA PUERTA DE NUESTRA COMUNIDAD.

TAMBIEN ES EL GENERADOR ECONOMICO NUMERO UNO DEL CONDADO.

POR ESO, TENEMOS QUE HACER TODO LO POSIBLE PARA MEJORAR EL AEROPUERTO, Y QUE SIGA AUMENTANDO EL NIVEL DE TURISMO Y COMERCIO.

UNO DE LOS RETOS QUE TENEMOS ES QUE NO HAY SUFICIENTES AGENTES DE ADUANA PARA PROCESAR A LAS PERSONAS QUE NOS VISITAN.

HOY, LE PEDIMOS AL GOBIERNO FEDERAL QUE AUMENTE EL NUMERO DE AGENTES DE ADUANA PARA PROCESAR AL GRAN NUMERO DE PASAJEROS INTERNACIONALES QUE VIENEN A MIAMI.

CON AGENTES ADICIONALES, PODEMOS TRAER MAS PASAJEROS, Y SEGUIR MEJORANDO NUESTRA ECONOMIA.

MUCHAS GRACIAS A TODOS.

