

BETTY, THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTRODUCTION.

BETTY IS THE COORDINATOR FOR THE MAYOR'S INITIATIVE ON AGING...

AND SHE DOES A GREAT JOB IN HELPING SENIORS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL THE PROGRAMS WE OFFER AS A COUNTY TO HELP IMPROVE THE LIVES OF OUR ELDERLY.

AND SPEAKING OF HELPING THE ELDERLY HAVE BETTER LIVES...

I WANT TO START BY THANKING MAX ROTHMAN AND THE ALLIANCE FOR AGING FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO IN OUR COMMUNITY FOR OUR SENIORS.

IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE FOR ME TO VISIT WITH OUR SENIORS, AND I'D LIKE TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR WELCOMING ME FOR THIS VERY IMPORTANT EVENT AS WE RECOGNIZE WORLD ELDER ABUSE DAY.

WHEN I LOOK AROUND THE ROOM AT ALL OF YOU, I SEE OUR PARENTS, OUR GRANDPARENTS - YOU'RE ALL A VALUABLE TREASURE OF OUR COMMUNITY.

AND WE ALL KNOW HOW YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HANDLE A TREASURE...

WE NEED TO CARE FOR IT, RIGHT? BUT THAT'S NOT ALWAYS THE CASE.

IT'S A SAD REALITY THAT WE EVEN HAVE ELDERLY ABUSE, AND THE REASON WE ARE HERE IS BECAUSE IT'S A REALITY WE ALL NEED TO STOP.

EVERY DAY, THERE ARE TELEVISION AND NEWSPAPER STORIES ABOUT SENIORS WHO HAVE BEEN ABUSED, NEGLECTED, AND EXPLOITED.

WHAT'S WORSE, IT'S OFTEN BY PEOPLE THEY TRUST THE MOST - A FAMILY MEMBER, A LOVED ONE, A CAREGIVER.

ELDER ABUSE CAN COME IN MANY FORMS, FROM PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE...

TO NEGLECT, ABANDONMENT, OR EVEN FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION.

JUST LAST YEAR, THE STATE OF FLORIDA HAD MORE THAN 40,000 REPORTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

BUT IF FOR EVERY CASE THAT IS REPORTED, THERE ARE CLOSE TO 25 THAT ARE NOT. THIS MEANS THE ACTUAL NUMBERS ARE WAY HIGHER!

THE TRUTH IS VERY FEW SENIORS WHO HAVE BEEN ABUSED GET THE HELP THEY NEED.

THE MAIN THING IS TO BE AWARE.

WE KNOW THAT ELDER ABUSE CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE.

IT AFFECTS YOUR NEIGHBOR, YOUR LOVED ONES, IT CAN EVEN HAPPEN TO YOU.

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW SHOWS OF ABUSE...

WHETHER THEY ARE PHYSICAL LIKE BRUISES, DEHYDRATION OR MALNUTRITION, LACK OF NECESSITIES SUCH AS FOOD OR WATER...

OR MENTAL SIGNS SUCH AS FEAR, DEPRESSION, CONFUSION OR DISORIENTATION – WE NEED TO SPEAK UP!

IT'S CRITICAL THAT IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS EXPERIENCING ELDER ABUSE...

REPORT IT RIGHT AWAY.

SO WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT ELDER ABUSE?

THERE IS A HOTLINE YOU CAN CALL AT 1-800-96-ABUSE.

OR YOU CAN TELL SOMEONE YOU TRUST.

ALSO, MANY TIMES WE ARE AFRAID OR ASHAMED TO SPEAK UP.

THIS IS WHY MOST CASES OF ELDER ABUSE GO UNDETECTED.

DON'T ASSUME THAT SOMEONE ELSE WILL REPORT A SUSPICIOUS SITUATION.

AND THIS BRINGS ME TO MY FINAL POINT.

WE DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO TAKE CARE OF OUR ELDERLY...

SO IF YOU EVER SUSPECT THAT ANYONE OF YOU IS NOT BEING TREATED WITH THE LOVE AND CARE YOU RESPECT, SPEAK UP!

IT'S ONLY BY WORKING TOGETHER THAT WE HAVE THE POWER TO PREVENT AND PUT AN END TO ELDER ABUSE.

AND NOW, ON BEHALF OF ALL THE RESIDENTS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY...

IT IS MY PLEASURE TO PRESENT THIS PROCLAMATION TO MR. MAX ROTHMAN COMMEMORATING WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY.

THANK YOU AND MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

