

**GOOD MORNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.**

**I'M PLEASED TO BE HERE FOR THE RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY OF TRI-RAIL'S NEW MIAMI AIRPORT STATION AT THE MIAMI INTERMODAL CENTER, AND TO PARTICIPATE IN "STAND UP FOR TRANSPORTATION DAY".**

**THANK YOU ALL FOR ATTENDING AND PARTICIPATING.**

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS, AND DURING RUSH HOUR, IT SEEMS LIKE 2.6 MILLION VEHICLES TOO.**

**WHICH IS WHY, ALONG WITH THE SUPPORT OF MEMBERS OF OUR BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY AND OUR PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS, MY ADMINISTRATION IS WORKING DILIGENTLY TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF OUR GROWING COMMUNITY.**

**I WOULD LIKE TO THANK GUS PEGO AND HIS TEAM AT THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, JACK STEPHENS AT THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY, MEMBERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S TRANSIT DEPARTMENT - THE LARGEST TRANSIT AGENCY IN THE STATE - AND OUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR WORKING TOGETHER ON THIS AND OTHER PROJECTS.**

**DESPITE THE MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS WE HAVE HAD OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, WE KNOW THERE IS STILL MUCH TO DO.**

**AND WE KNOW THERE IS NO SILVER BULLET THAT WILL SOLVE OUR TRANSIT ISSUES.**

**CONGESTION ON OUR HIGHWAYS AND ROADS WON'T DISAPPEAR OVERNIGHT, AND WE CERTAINLY STILL NEED TO KEEP WORKING TO IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN OUR COUNTY'S WESTERN AREAS AND THE URBAN CORE.**

**BUT WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS. AND TODAY IS EVIDENCE OF THAT.  
AFTER YEARS OF ANTICIPATION, THE TRI-RAIL CONNECTION HERE  
AT THE INTERMODAL CENTER IS A REALITY!**

**THIS ALONG WITH METRORAIL'S ORANGE LINE WHICH WAS  
INAUGURATED JUST A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WILL BENEFIT  
MILLIONS OF PASSENGERS THAT ARE BOTH RESIDENTS OF THE TRI-  
COUNTY AREA, AS WELL AS VISITORS.**

**AND WE WELCOMED A LOT OF THOSE LAST YEAR - 14.6 MILLION OF  
THEM!**

**THAT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER BECAUSE OUR RESIDENTS AND  
OUR VISITORS WILL BE ABLE TO USE TRI-RAIL TO MOVE AROUND  
OUR COUNTY.**

**TRI-RAIL CONNECTS NEARLY FIFTEEN THOUSAND PASSENGERS  
DAILY FROM PALM BEACH TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AND JUST IN THE  
YEAR 2013 APPROXIMATELY 4.3 MILLION PEOPLE UTILIZED THE  
TRAIN AS THEIR MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM WORK.**

**IMPROVING OUR TRANSIT AND MOBILITY OPTIONS ISN'T SOMETHING  
THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY CAN DO ALONE, HOWEVER.**

**WE NEED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO BE INVOLVED TOO.**

**IN FACT, WE NEED SUSTAINED, ROBUST FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS,  
AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT,**

**IN OCTOBER OF LAST YEAR AFTER MEETINGS AT THE WHITE HOUSE,  
I VISITED WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION.**

**I WAS INFORMED THAT DUE TO GRIDLOCK IN OUR CONGRESS, THE  
DEPARTMENT ONLY HAD FUNDING THROUGH APRIL.**

**WHICH MEANS WE CANNOT RELY ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT UNTIL CONGRESS PROPERLY FUNDS THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT.**

**BUT WE MUST CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER - GOVERNMENT - FEDERAL, STATE AND COUNTY. AS WELL AS THE PRIVATE SECTOR.**

**I CALL THIS MULTI-LAYERED APPROACH THE “LASAGNA METHOD”.**

**TODAY, WE JOIN OTHERS IN THE TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY NATIONWIDE, WHO ARE ADVOCATING FOR, AND SUPPORTING, A LONG-TERM, SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING BILL, RATHER THAN EXTENDING A SHORT-TERM EXTENSION OF THE CURRENT BILL, MAP 21, WHICH IS SET TO EXPIRE AT THE END OF MAY.**

**WE URGE OUR CONGRESS TO WORK TOGETHER IN DRAFTING A BI-PARTISAN BILL THAT WILL ALLOW US TO PLAN FOR FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS, WHILE MAINTAINING IN A STATE OF GOOD REPAIR OUR CURRENT, AS WELL AS OUR FUTURE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ROLLING STOCK.**

**THE TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY HAS MADE A STRONG CASE IN DEMONSTRATING THAT A LACK OF A LONG-TERM FEDERAL FUNDING BILL RESULTS IN TREMENDOUS UNCERTAINTY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IN TERMS OF TRANSPORTATION PROJECT PLANNING.**

**IT ALSO DISCOURAGES INVESTMENTS BY THE PRIVATE-SECTOR, WHICH SEES RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH NO LONG-TERM FUNDING COMMITMENT BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.**

**HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, THE SHORTFALL OF THIS ESSENTIAL FUNDING BILL WOULD ADVERSELY IMPACT METROBUS, METRORAIL AND METROMOVER PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS, AS WELL AS OUR PARATRANSIT SERVICE.**

**FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING KEEPS OUR COUNTY'S ECONOMIC ENGINES – MIA AND PORTMIAMI - AS WELL AS OUR RESIDENTS RUNNING, BY ALLOWING US TO PLAN AND ADVANCE LARGE, MULTI-YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS.**

**IN CLOSING, I WANT TO CONGRATULATE TRI-RAIL ON ITS NEW STATION.**

**I HOPE THAT IN THE FUTURE, TRI-RAIL WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO LINK DOWNTOWN MIAMI WORKING WITH ALL ABOARD FLORIDA.**

**THAT WOULD BE A ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO OPEN UP THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR, WHERE APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS CURRENTLY RESIDE.**

**AGAIN, THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE TODAY.**

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!**

**[PRESENT PROCLAMATION]**

