

GOOD MORNING AND THANK YOU MR. REMILLARD FOR THAT KIND INTRODUCTION!

ONCE AGAIN, WE ARE THRILLED TO HOST THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM OF THE AMERICAS NOT ONLY BECAUSE MIAMI-DADE IS AN IDEAL LOCATION AS THE GATEWAY TO THE AMERICAS, BUT BECAUSE OUR DIVERSE, BUSINESS-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY HAS WEATHERED THE MOST CHALLENGING OF ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES AND COME OUT STRONGER.

MIAMI-DADE'S \$6.2 BILLION COUNTY BUDGET IS LARGER THAN THE BUDGETS OF 15 U.S. STATES...

WITH 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS, MIAMI-DADE IS THE MOST POPULOUS COUNTY IN FLORIDA, WHICH IS NOW THE THIRD-MOST POPULOUS STATE IN THE COUNTRY.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MADE IT OFFICIAL THAT FLORIDA SURPASSED NEW YORK IN TOTAL POPULATION.

AND ALTHOUGH I LOVE "THE BIG APPLE", IT IS ALMOST IN THE 80S HERE ALREADY - BEACH WEATHER, IN OTHER WORDS - WHILE NEW YORK IS IN THE 50S.

YEAH, I CAN SEE WHY PEOPLE CONTINUE TO MOVE TO FLORIDA AND ESPECIALLY MIAMI-DADE.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN ONCE SAID THAT “NO NATION WAS EVER RUINED BY TRADE.”

I WISH HE COULD SEE US NOW!

NOT ONLY HAS TRADE NOT RUINED US – INTERNATIONAL TRADE HAS DONE WONDERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY, STATE AND NATION.

TO BEGIN WITH, WE HAVE BUILT A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE & COMMERCE:

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DECADES WE’VE DEVELOPED THE HUMAN CAPITAL, THE RELATIONSHIPS, THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION, AND THE VITAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS THAT MAKE INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE TICK.

WE HAVE CLEARLY GOT LOCATION ON OUR SIDE, TOO:

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS SITUATED AT THE NATURAL GEOGRAPHIC CROSSROADS BETWEEN

NORTH AMERICA, SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.

THAT POSITIONING MAKES US THE LOGICAL DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL POINT FOR GOODS FLOWING THROUGH ALL THREE REGIONS.

AND WE HAVE THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE HIGH-VOLUME GLOBAL TRADE & COMMERCE THAT COMES WITH OUR TREMENDOUS LOCATION.

OUR SEAPORT - PORTMIAMI - IS KNOWN AS THE "CRUISE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD"... OUR PORT HAD A \$27 BILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT ON OUR LOCAL ECONOMY IN 2014, AND OVER 200,000 JOBS WERE EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY SUPPORTED BY IT.

PORTMIAMI IS CURRENTLY COUNTING DOWN TO JULY FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE DEEP DREDGE PROJECT THAT IS DEEPENING THE PORT'S MAIN HARBOR CHANNEL FROM -42 FEET TO A DEPTH OF -50/52 FEET WHICH MEANS VERY SOON PORTMIAMI WILL BE THE ONLY MAJOR LOGISTICS HUB SOUTH OF VIRGINIA CAPABLE OF HANDLING FULLY LADEN POST-PANAMAX VESSELS.

MORE THAN \$1 BILLION OF CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS ARE TRANSFORMING PORTMIAMI.

ALREADY IN PLACE IS A NEW ON-DOCK INTERMODAL RAIL SERVICE LINKING PORTMIAMI TO 70 PERCENT OF THE U.S. POPULATION IN FOUR DAYS OR LESS; AS WELL AS A NEW TUNNEL LINKING THE PORT DIRECTLY TO THE UNITED STATES INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM. AND THE TUNNEL IS NOW ALLEVIATING TRAFFIC BY REMOVING APPROXIMATELY 14,000 VEHICLES FROM DOWNTOWN ROADWAYS EVERY DAY.

ALL OF THAT MEANS MORE TRADE & LOGISTICS JOBS FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND MORE PROSPERITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

ON THE PORT TUNNEL AND DEEP DREDGE, IN PARTICULAR, I WANT TO TIP MY HAT TO GOVERNOR SCOTT AND OUR STATE PARTNERS.

THEY HAVE CLEARLY MADE INVESTING IN TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE A PRIORITY, AS WELL.

AND IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT INVESTING DOLLARS –

OUR FRIENDS IN TALLAHASSEE ARE MAKING IT A POINT TO TAKE A THOUGHTFUL, COORDINATED APPROACH TO BUILDING SMART NETWORKS THAT WILL MOVE GOODS SMOOTHLY AND EFFICIENTLY THROUGHOUT OUR STATE.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE ARE MOVING TOGETHER TOWARDS A BRIGHT FUTURE AND HAVE A LOT TO BE EXCITED ABOUT!

BUT EVEN AS WE LOOK AHEAD, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT FOR US TO REMEMBER HISTORY AND THE MANY LESSONS THAT IT CAN TEACH US.

AND WHEN I LOOK AT WHAT MIAMI HAS BECOME IN ITS RELATIVELY BRIEF EXISTENCE, I SEE A LOT OF PARALLELS WITH VENICE'S TRANSFORMATION CENTURIES AGO.

IN THE 10TH CENTURY, VENICE WAS A MODEST FISHING VILLAGE BUILT AT THE POINT WHERE TWO RIVERS EMPTIED INTO THE SEA.

BUT BY THE 1200S, IT HAD UNDERGONE A TOTAL TRANSFORMATION, TAPPING INTO ITS STRATEGIC LOCATION ON THE ADRIATIC SEA TO BECOME THE VERY DEFINITION OF A GLOBAL CITY: A BUSTLING CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE CONNECTING

WESTERN EUROPE TO THE REST OF THE KNOWN-WORLD.

MIAMI HAS FOLLOWED A SIMILAR PATH:

BACK IN THE LATE 1800S, THIS COMMUNITY WAS A SMALL SETTLEMENT NEAR THE MOUTH OF THE MIAMI RIVER ON BISCAYNE BAY.

FAST FORWARD TO TODAY, AND IT IS PLAIN TO SEE THAT WE HAVE GONE THE VENICE ROUTE, LEVERAGING OUR GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION AND RESOURCES TO BECOME A GLOBAL CITY IN OUR OWN RIGHT.

FURTHERMORE, MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - WHERE MANY OF YOU MAY HAVE FLOWN IN THROUGH - IS NOT ONLY ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST IMPORTANT HUBS, IT IS QUICKLY BECOMING A GATEWAY TO EUROPE AND AFRICA IN ADDITION TO ITS UNDISPUTED TITLE AS THE GATEWAY TO THE AMERICAS... ALL WHILE HAVING A \$34 BILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY AND SUPPORTING ABOUT 280,000 JOBS IN OUR COUNTY.

MIAMI-DADE HAS CREATED MORE JOBS DURING THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY THAN ANY OF FLORIDA'S 67 COUNTIES.

OVER 100,000 PRIVATE SECTOR JOBS HAVE BEEN CREATED OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS IN OUR COUNTY.

UNEMPLOYMENT WHEN I WAS FIRST ELECTED MAYOR WAS NEAR 12 PERCENT, BUT NOW STANDS AT JUST UNDER SIX PERCENT.

THAT IS BECAUSE THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAVE WORKED TOGETHER AND COMPLIMENTED ONE ANOTHER TO SET THE CONDITIONS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT WE DON'T HAVE CHALLENGES.

WE DO. BUT WHAT SETS US APART, IN MY VIEW, IS THAT WE WELCOME IDEAS AND INPUT FROM EVERYWHERE. WE WORK COLLABORATIVELY TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES.

I BELIEVE OUR COUNTY IS AN EXAMPLE FOR THE REST OF THE STATE AND COUNTRY.

AND ALTHOUGH ALL THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND FALLING UNEMPLOYMENT RATES ARE WONDERFUL NEWS, WE ARE NOT RESTING.

MIAMI-DADE IS A FORWARD-THINKING COMMUNITY THAT WELCOMES AND ENCOURAGES INVESTMENT HERE, AND RELISHES ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE AS AN IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS CENTER FOR THE AMERICAS.

LIKE YOUR ORGANIZATION, WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON FOSTERING DIALOGUE TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.

I ALSO STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT MIAMI IS WHAT OTHER MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREAS IN THE U.S. WILL LOOK AND FEEL LIKE WITHIN THE NEXT TEN YEARS.

IN FACT, A TESTAMENT TO OUR IMPORTANCE CAN BE SEEN IN BOTH THE PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMUNITY, WHICH IS AVAILABLE FOR ALL TO SEE WHEN DRIVING OR WALKING THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTY, AS WELL AS IN OUR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP.

PRIOR TO BECOMING LT. GOVERNOR, CARLOS LOPEZ-CANTERA WAS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S ELECTED PROPERTY APPRAISER. AND BEFORE THAT, HE WAS A STATE REPRESENTATIVE. WE CERTAINLY APPRECIATE WHAT HE IS DOING ON BEHALF OF OUR COUNTY IN TALLAHASSEE.

AND IF YOU HAVE NOT HEARD, NOT ONE BUT TWO OF OUR RESIDENTS MAY BE RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. THAT IS PRETTY AMAZING!

AS MAYOR OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, I WELCOME YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY AND ASK THAT YOU USE THE FREE TIME YOU HAVE TO EXPLORE OUR HOME.

YOU HAVE PARTNERS HERE THAT ARE WILLING TO WORK TO GENERATE IDEAS AND PROVIDE SOLUTIONS TO CRITICAL ISSUES THAT AFFECT US ALL, AND YOU HAVE STRONG SUPPORTERS IN THE COUNTY MAYOR'S OFFICE.

MY OFFICE IS ALWAYS OPEN TO NEW IDEAS AND FEEDBACK.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR BEING HERE!

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

