

GOOD AFTERNOON EVERYONE!

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO CALL MIAMI-DADE COUNTY "HOME", I HOPE YOU ARE PROUD OF YOUR COMMUNITY AND WHERE IT IS HEADED.

AND IF WE HAVE ANYONE VISITING OUR COMMUNITY HERE TODAY, WELCOME TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

THANKS TO THE TEAM AT HOLLAND AND KNIGHT FOR ORGANIZING THIS EVENT AND FOR INVITING ME TO PARTICIPATE.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO RECOGNIZE HIALEAH MAYOR CARLOS HERNANDEZ; MIAMI COMMISSIONER MARC SARNOFF; DORAL COUNCILMAN PETE CABRERA; AND MIAMI BEACH ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER JOE JIMENEZ, FOR JOINING US.

I ALSO THANK ALL OF THE SPEAKERS, PARTNERS, AND PARTICIPANTS OF THIS 1ST SOUTH FLORIDA ROUNDTABLE FORUM.

THANK YOU ALL!

I KNOW I AM BIASED, BUT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS THE IDEAL LOCATION FOR THIS FORUM.

NOT ONLY ARE WE THE UNDISPUTED GATEWAY TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN... BUT WE ARE ALSO INCREASINGLY BECOMING A GATEWAY TO AFRICA, EUROPE, AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

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.

BUT WHAT SEPARATES ONE COMMUNITY FROM ANOTHER IS THE WILLINGNESS OF THOSE IN GOVERNMENT, AND THE COMMUNITY TO MAKE THE COMMITMENTS NECESSARY TO CREATE THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE THAT WILL ATTRACT PEOPLE TO LIVE, WORK, AND RAISE A FAMILY IN YOUR HOME TOWN.

HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER TO CREATE A SOLID ECONOMIC CLIMATE BY KEEPING TAXES LOW AND INVESTING IN THE AREAS THAT ADD VALUE TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OUR RESIDENTS, INCLUDING:

**PUBLIC SAFETY, PARKS AND GREEN SPACES,
ARTS AND CULTURE,
OUR HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS, AS
WELL AS OUR NEIGHBORHOODS.**

**THOSE INVESTMENTS ARE THE ONES WORLD-
CLASS COMMUNITIES MAKE.**

**AND THAT IS WHY I FIRST RAN FOR MAYOR OF
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FOUR YEARS AGO.**

**BECAUSE I HAD A VISION OF WHAT OUR
COMMUNITY COULD BE.**

**I WANTED TO LEAVE MY THREE CHILDREN AND
FIVE GRANDCHILDREN WITH A BETTER MIAMI-DADE
COUNTY.**

**AND ALTHOUGH WE STILL HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO
DO, I TRULY BELIEVE THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS
REPRESENTATIVE OF WHAT OTHER MAJOR
METROPOLITAN AREAS ACROSS THE UNITED
STATES WILL LOOK AND FEEL LIKE OVER THE NEXT
TEN YEARS.**

**ON THE JOBS FRONT, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS
ADDED MORE THAN 112,000 NEW PRIVATE SECTOR
JOBS SINCE THE SUMMER OF 2011.**

OUR COUNTY - WHICH IS THE MOST POPULOUS IN WHAT IS NOW THE THIRD LARGEST STATE IN OUR UNION - LEADS FLORIDA IN JOB CREATION.

SOME OF THE BEST NEWS WE HAD TO BEGIN 2015 WAS THAT THE COUNTYWIDE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DROPPED TO PRE-RECESSION LEVELS IN FEBRUARY.

WHEN I WAS FIRST ELECTED MAYOR IN THE SUMMER OF 2011, THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WAS AT ABOUT 12 PERCENT. TODAY, THE RATE IS AT 6 PERCENT.

WHILE I DON'T BELIEVE GOVERNMENT CREATES JOBS, IT CAN CREATE A FAVORABLE CLIMATE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO GROW AND EMPLOY LOCAL RESIDENTS.

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT WE HAVE DONE HERE IN MIAMI-DADE AND CONTINUE TO DO.

BUT WHILE WE CONTINUE TO WORK TO BE THE PLACE THAT CREATES THE WELL-PAYING JOBS, IN TODAY'S WORLD, WE ALSO NEED TO TRAIN THE WORKERS THAT WILL FILL JOB VACANCIES.

IN OTHER WORDS, MY ADMINISTRATION IS ACTIVELY WORKING TO CLOSE THE SKILLS GAP AND WE HAVE HAD INITIAL SUCCESS.

IN DECEMBER, WE LAUNCHED THE “EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE” INITIATIVE.

“EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE” PROVIDES JOB TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO THOSE RESIDENTS IN AREAS WITH HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AND HIGH CRIME.

TOO MANY IN OUR COMMUNITY HAVE NOT HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE IN OUR OVERALL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, THAT IS WHY EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IS SO IMPORTANT.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND CRIME IN LIBERTY CITY AND OVERTOWN SHOULDN'T ONLY BE A CONCERN FOR RESIDENTS OF THOSE AREAS. IT SHOULD ALSO CONCERN THE REST OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S RESIDENTS.

TO DATE, MORE THAN 900 RESIDENTS HAVE ENROLLED IN THE FIRST TRAINING CLASSES, AND HUNDREDS HAVE ALREADY SECURED EMPLOYMENT.

AND THAT'S IMPORTANT TO EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM -- BECAUSE WHETHER YOU ARE A HOLLAND AND KNIGHT ATTORNEY, OR A CONSTRUCTION WORKER BOUNCING FROM JOB SITE TO JOB SITE -- WE ARE ALL MIAMIANS.

WE CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER AND EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IS JUST ONE INITIATIVE I URGE YOU TO BECOME EDUCATED ON SO THAT WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE OUR COMMUNITY.

ANOTHER GREAT EXAMPLE WHERE MY ADMINISTRATION HAS SOUGHT TO ADDRESS A CRITICAL NEED IS WITH OUR LIBERTY CITY RISING INITIATIVE.

ANNOUNCED EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT WILL LEAD A MULTI-YEAR, PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP EFFORT TO REDEVELOP LIBERTY SQUARE.

FIRST BUILT IN THE 1930'S, LIBERTY SQUARE HAS HAD HIGH RATES OF CRIME AND UNEMPLOYMENT FOR YEARS.

BUT MY ADMINISTRATION IS OUT TO CHANGE THAT.

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF FORMER HUD ASSISTANT SECRETARY MICHAEL LIU, THE DEPARTMENT WILL REDEVELOP LIBERTY SQUARE INTO A MIXED-USE, MIXED-INCOME COMMUNITY WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY BUILDING A NEW MODERN HOUSING COMMUNITY A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY.

OUR BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ALREADY APPROVED A \$74 MILLION ALLOCATION, WHICH OUR COUNTY WILL USE TO LEVERAGE AN ADDITIONAL \$200 MILLION IN PRIVATE INVESTMENT.

I BELIEVE THAT IS WHAT GOOD GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO – ADDRESS A CRITICAL NEED BY PARTNERING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE LANDSCAPE OF OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY IS MUCH DIFFERENT THAN IT WAS AS LITTLE AS 10 YEARS AGO AND I KNOW MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WILL CONTINUE TO GROW.

EVIDENCE OF THAT CAN BE SEEN JUST OUTSIDE THIS BUILDING.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS COMPLETING IMPROVEMENTS TO PORTMIAMI THAT WILL MAKE IT THE ONLY PORT SOUTH OF VIRGINIA CAPABLE OF SERVICING THE NEWER LARGER SHIPS THAT WILL NOW CROSS THE WIDENED PANAMA CANAL.

THOSE IMPROVEMENTS MEAN MORE TRADE & LOGISTICS JOBS FOR OUR RESIDENTS, AND MORE PROSPERITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

TOGETHER WITH OUR TOP ECONOMIC ENGINE MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, PORTMIAMI AND MIA SUPPORT NEARLY 600,000 JOBS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AND HAVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF APPROXIMATELY \$60 BILLION ANNUALLY.

ALTHOUGH I'M 61 YEARS OLD -- AN AGE IS JUST A NUMBER ANYWAY -- I CONSIDER MYSELF A TECH MAYOR.

THAT IS WHY WE ARE ALSO UNLEASHING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT OF OUR COMMUNITY BY SUPPORTING START-UP INCUBATORS AND OTHER TECHNOLOGY BASED BUSINESSES.

WE ARE TAKING MULTIPLE STEPS TO BE AN ENABLER OF INNOVATION, NOT A BARRIER TO IT.

AND INVESTORS ARE NOTICING -- OVER \$650 MILLION IN VENTURE CAPITAL FUNDING HAS COME INTO MIAMI-DADE IN THE PAST FEW YEARS. ABOUT FORTY TECH AND INNOVATION COMPANIES EITHER ESTABLISHED OPERATIONS IN OUR COMMUNITY, OR EXPANDED EXISTING OPS HERE IN THE PAST YEAR.

WE MAY NOT BE "TECH BEACH" JUST YET, BUT WE ARE ACTIVELY WORKING TOWARDS IT BECAUSE THE DIVERSIFICATION OF OUR ECONOMY IS KEY TO OUR FUTURE.

I'M SURE MANY OF YOU AGREE.

I BELIEVE THAT BY POSITIONING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AS AN EMERGING LEADER IN TECHNOLOGY, NOT ONLY ARE WE INCREASING THE INTERACTION AND PARTICIPATION OF OUR RESIDENTS, BUT WE ARE ALSO CREATING A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN.

OUR EFFORTS HAVE PAID OFF IN OTHER WAYS. EARLY LAST YEAR, MICROSOFT OPENED

THE FIRST MICROSOFT INNOVATION CENTER IN THE UNITED STATES AT VENTURE HIVE HERE IN MIAMI AND JUST DOWN THE STREET FROM HERE IN DOWNTOWN.

THE MIC BRINGS TOGETHER INNOVATORS ALONG WITH STUDENTS AND OTHERS TO ACCELERATE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES, CREATING THE TECH JOBS OF TOMORROW - SOMETHING THAT WE ARE VERY PROUD OF.

ALL OF YOU IN THIS ROOM KNOW THAT TECHNOLOGY IS ALSO KEY TO THE FUTURE OF OUR GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING OUR POLICE DEPARTMENT.

THAT IS WHY LAST WEEK DURING THE EMERGE AMERICAS CONFERENCE, WE TOOK A BIG STEP TO MAKING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY A SAFER COMMUNITY BY USING TECHNOLOGY.

WE ANNOUNCED ONE OF THE FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND MOBILE APPLICATION TOOLS THAT WILL BE KNOWN AS THE COMMUNITY ON PATROL APP THAT WILL PROVIDE RESIDENTS WITH THE ABILITY TO ANONYMOUSLY REPORT TIPS TO THE MDPD COMMAND CENTER, UPLOAD VIDEOS, PHOTOS AND

NOTES, FILE POLICE REPORTS AND COMMEND MDPD OFFICERS - ALL FROM THEIR SMART PHONE.

JUST LIKE BODY WORN CAMERAS - WHICH I ADVOCATED FOR IN 2012 AND WELL BEFORE THE EVENTS IN FERGUSON AND BALTIMORE - COPA WILL BE A TOOL FOR OUR APPROXIMATELY 2,650 POLICE OFFICERS IN THE MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND OUR COUNTY'S 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS TO USE TO BETTER PROTECT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

WHEN IT LAUNCHES LATER THIS SUMMER, THE APP WILL ALSO ALLOW THE MIAMI-DADE POLICE DEPARTMENT, THE LARGEST PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCY IN THE SOUTHEAST, TO DISTRIBUTE NOTIFICATIONS TO USERS ABOUT CRITICAL ISSUES HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY.

IN CLOSING, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS TURNED THE CORNER. I'VE NEVER BEEN MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT OUR FUTURE.

AS MAYOR, ON BEHALF OF OUR 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS, I THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING OUR COMMUNITY TO HOLD THIS IMPORTANT FORUM

AND FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

IT IS MY HOPE THAT YOUR TIME TOGETHER IS PRODUCTIVE, AND THAT THIS IS THE FIRST ONE OF MANY FORUMS TO BE HELD HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

MY OFFICE IS ALWAYS OPEN TO NEW IDEAS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE OUT THERE EVERY DAY MAKING OUR COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE.

IF THERE IS ANY WAY WE CAN MAKE YOUR WORK EASIER -- LET US KNOW.

ALL OF YOU HAVE A PARTNER IN COUNTY HALL.

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