

GOOD MORNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

IT'S AN HONOR TO JOIN ALL OF YOU TODAY FOR THE BEACON COUNCIL'S ANNUAL BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S RETREAT.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO GROWING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S ECONOMY AND WORKING TO HAVE A BETTER COMMUNITY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF MIAMIANS.

MEETINGS LIKE THIS ONE ARE CRUCIAL TO THE STRENGTHING OF ANY ORGANIZATION.

AS MEMBERS OF THIS BOARD, YOU PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN DETERMINING THE DIRECTION THAT THE BEACON COUNCIL TAKES.

AND THAT'S SIGNIFICANT GIVEN THE POTENTIAL THAT THIS ORGANIZATION HAS TO POSITIVELY IMPACT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

I WANT TO BEGIN BY TOUCHING ON OUR PRIORITIES:

FIRST AND FOREMOST, WHILE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS CREATED OVER 100,000 PRIVATE SECTOR JOBS SINCE THE END OF THE GREAT RECESSION, WE NEED TO CAPITALIZE ON OUR STRENGTHS AND CONTINUALLY GROW THOSE SECTORS THAT HAVE

SERVED US SO WELL: TOURISM, INTERNATIONAL TRADE, AND FINANCE.

THE BUILT-IN ADVANTAGES THAT OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY ALREADY ENJOYS ARE CLEAR:

- **AN IDEAL LOCATION THAT HAS HISTORICALLY RESULTED IN MIAMI BEING RECOGNIZED AS THE GATEWAY TO LATIN AMERICA, BUT OUR INVESTMENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY HAVE US INCREASINGLY BEING RECOGNIZED AS THE GATEWAY TO THE WORLD...**
- **STRONG TRANSPORTATION LINKS TO INTERNATIONAL MARKETS;**
- **AND A SKILLED, MULTI-LINGUAL AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE. OVER HALF OF OUR 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS WERE BORN OUTSIDE THE U.S.**

ONE OF THE TASKS THAT YOUR GROUP MUST CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON IS- LEVERAGING ALL OF OUR COLLECTIVE ASSETS TO GROW OUR ECONOMY THROUGH THE USE OF SMART STRATEGIES.

AND SPEAKING OF LEVERAGING OUR COMMUNITY'S ASSETS, I RECENTLY WENT ON A TRADE MISSION TO PARIS WITH A TEAM FROM THE BEACON COUNCIL AND SOME OF OUR COMMISSIONERS.

THE TRIP WAS SUCCESSFUL – AND INFORMATIVE.

WE MET WITH A VARIETY OF BUSINESSES, MAINLY FROM THE AVIATION SECTOR.

THE TAKEAWAY FROM THE MISSION WAS CLEAR, AND SO WAS THE MESSAGE FROM THE MANY FOREIGN BUSINESS LEADERS THAT WE MET WITH:

MIAMI IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS AND THEY WANT IN ON THE ACTION. THEY SEE US AS THE IDEAL PLACE TO HOUSE THEIR LATIN AMERICAN HEADQUARTERS IN A BROAD RANGE OF SECTORS.

IN ADDITION, WE ARE MAKING UNPRECEDENTED INVESTMENTS IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE – AND ARE ALWAYS WORKING DILIGENTLY TO IMPROVE OUR TRANSIT MOBILITY.

WE ARE COMPLETING IMPROVEMENTS TO PORTMIAMI THAT WILL MAKE IT ONE OF THE FEW PORTS ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD CAPABLE OF SERVICING THE NEWER LARGER SHIPS THAT WILL NOW CROSS THE WIDENED PANAMA CANAL.

AND VERY SOON WE’LL BE READY TO WELCOME THE LARGEST CARGO SHIPS IN THE WORLD TO OUR PORT WHEN THE NEWLY-EXPANDED PANAMA CANAL OPENS FOR BUSINESS.

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

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

SO THE NEED TO CONTINUE BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS HAS NEVER BEEN CLEARER – IT’S UP TO EVERYONE IN THE ROOM TO KEEP OUR FORWARD MOMENTUM GOING.

WE NEED TO FOCUS ON OUR ABILITY TO ATTRACT NEW KINDS OF INVESTORS AND NEW KINDS OF JOB-CREATING BUSINESSES. SO WE’VE GOT TO EXTEND OURSELVES – TO LOOK BEYOND WHAT IS ALREADY HERE IN FRONT OF US.

BEYOND BUILDING ON OUR CURRENT STRENGTHS, WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND CULTIVATE NEW ONES. TECH-BASED BUSINESSES, THE LIFE SCIENCES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP NEED TO BE A BIG PART OF ANY CONVERSATION THAT WE HAVE ABOUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HERE IN MIAMI.

THERE IS SO MUCH ROOM FOR LOCAL GROWTH IN ALL OF THESE EMERGING SECTORS, NOT ONLY IS THERE ROOM FOR GROWTH...THERE’S A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE MIAMI THE REGIONAL CAPITAL FOR THESE INDUSTRIES – THERE’S A

CHANCE FOR US TO BECOME THE TECH HUB OF THE AMERICAS, PERHAPS *TECH BEACH*.

FOR EXAMPLE THE E-MERGE CONFERENCE, A GAME-CHANGER FOR OUR COMMUNITY, WILL CONTINUE TO PUT MIAMI ON THE MAP IN THE TECH WORLD AND GIVE US THE ABILITY TO GROW THE LOCAL I.T. SECTOR.

AND PLACES LIKE THE VENTURE HIVE IN DOWNTOWN ARE FUSING THE FIELDS OF TECHNOLOGY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, LAYING A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR THESE NEW GROWTH INDUSTRIES.

THEY'RE CERTAINLY INNOVATORS AND VISIONARIES, AND THEY BRING THAT NEW DIMENSION TO OUR ECONOMY. IT'S PRECISELY THESE KINDS OF ENDEAVORS THAT WE MUST CULTIVATE AND SUPPORT.

IN CLOSING, IT'S IMPORTANT TO HIGHLIGHT THE FACT THAT ALL OF THESE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES MESH VERY WELL WITH THE ONE COMMUNITY ONE GOAL TARGETED INDUSTRY PLAN.

THE BEACON COUNCIL IS A PERFECT VEHICLE TO LEAD THE CHARGE. YOU ARE INTEGRAL TO OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SUCCESS.

AS INDIVIDUALS, YOU ARE LEADERS IN A WIDE ARRAY OF INDUSTRIES. AND TOGETHER, YOU REPRESENT A POTENT FORCE FOR POSITIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HERE IN MIAMI.

SO AS I ALWAYS TELL YOU, I CALL ON YOU TO TAP INTO YOUR TALENT TO CONTINUE LEADING US FORWARD.

BECAUSE YOU ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR FORMULA FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LONG-TERM SUCCESS.

WITH THAT, I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR TIME THIS MORNING.

I'M GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THIS BOARD AND – BY EXTENSION – TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

AND I'M VERY EXCITED FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT AWAIT US ALL!

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

THANK YOU!