

THANK YOU, LESTER, FOR THAT INTRODUCTION, AND FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO THIS PROJECT AS DIRECTOR OF THE MIAMI-DADE WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT.

GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE. THANK YOU ALL FOR JOINING US THIS MORNING.

I WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE COUNTY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN JEAN MONESTIME AND COUNTY COMMISSIONER BARBARA JORDAN. THANK YOU BOTH FOR BEING HERE TODAY AND FOR ALL THAT YOU HAVE DONE IN SUPPORT OF THIS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT -- WHICH IS THE LARGEST IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S HISTORY.

I AM PLEASED TO JOIN YOU THIS MORNING FOR THE GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR THE 72-INCH WASTEWATER LINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT.

THIS NEW WASTEWATER LINE WILL INCREASE SERVICE CAPACITY AND IMPROVE THE AGING WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE IN NORTH MIAMI-DADE.

THIS PROJECT WILL ALSO RESULT IN THE UPGRADING OF THOUSANDS OF MILES OF PIPES, PUMP STATIONS AND WATER AND WASTEWATER

TREATMENT PLANTS THAT PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY DRINKING WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES.

IN ADDITION, THE ENTIRE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IS PROJECTED TO CREATE APPROXIMATELY 16,470 NEW JOBS OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS, IMPROVE THE RELIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM, AND GENERATE AN ESTIMATED \$24.9 BILLION IN ECONOMIC OUTPUT.

IN OTHER WORDS, OUR WORK IS NOT ONLY NECESSARY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS; IT IS ALSO A JOB-CREATING PROJECT.

AS OUR COUNTY CONTINUES TO GROW, THE NEED TO IMPROVE OUR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IS PARAMOUNT. THE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT BRINGS WATER TO AND FROM HOMES -- AND HANDLES WASTEWATER FLOWS FOR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES -- IS ESSENTIAL TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND ECONOMIC VITALITY OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTY, WE ARE INVESTING \$13.5 BILLION IN OUR WATER AND WASTEWATER

INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE THAT THE MIAMI-DADE WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT IS ABLE TO CONTINUE PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY DRINKING WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES.

OUR MISSION IS TO UPGRADE OUR WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART, ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY ALTERNATIVES TO A SYSTEM THAT HAS SUPPORTED OUR COMMUNITY FOR MORE THAN 80 YEARS. THESE UPGRADES INCLUDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WATER TREATMENT PLANTS, THE INSTALLATION OF ELECTRONIC WATER METERS, A NEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT TO IMPROVE THE COASTAL ECOSYSTEM BY ELIMINATING ALL OCEAN DISCHARGE, AND PROJECTS LIKE THIS ONE: A 72-INCH WASTEWATER FORCE MAIN REPLACEMENT.

UNDERGROUND UTILITIES, SUCH AS THE FORCE MAIN WE ARE BREAKING GROUND ON TODAY, PROVIDE BASIC SERVICES THAT KEEP OUR COMMUNITY MOVING FORWARD. NATURALLY, THESE SYSTEMS AGE WITH TIME AND MUST BE REPLACED, AS MAINTENANCE ALONE CANNOT EXTEND THEIR LIFETIME PAST A CERTAIN POINTS.

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE, OR WAITING UNTIL A PIPE BREAKS OR A SYSTEM BREAKS DOWN, ARE THE MOST EXPENSIVE REPAIRS POSSIBLE. BUT BY CONTINUALLY MAINTAINING AND INVESTING IN THE SYSTEM, BY UPGRADING AND IMPLEMENTING SMARTER TECHNOLOGY, AS WE'RE DOING HERE, WE CAN SAVE OUR RESIDENTS MONEY OVER THE LONG RUN.

AND THAT'S A BIG PART OF OUR WORK AS A COUNTY GOVERNMENT -- SAVING TAXPAYER DOLLARS.

AS WE CONTINUE OUR WORK, WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS BEGINNING TO FEEL THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ESPECIALLY SEA LEVEL RISE.

THE OVERALL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TAKES BOTH INTO ACCOUNT FOR ITS FUTURE PLANNING.

IT HAS ALSO BEEN A SIGNIFICANT PART OF OUR PLANNING FOR DECADES.

I CAN SAY WITH PRIDE THAT MIAMI-DADE IS A RESILIENT COMMUNITY, AND THAT IS WHY OUR WORK IS SO IMPORTANT.

THE SUSTAINABILITY OF OUR COMMUNITY IS KEY TO OUR COLLECTIVE FUTURE AND IT IS ALSO AN ECONOMIC ISSUE.

OUR REGION LEADS THE STATE IN ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION.

AND AS MORE PEOPLE MOVE IN, WE NEED TO ADDRESS OUR NEED FOR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE, DENSITY AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, WHICH IS WHY WE'RE ACTIVELY DOING ALL WE CAN TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

WE ARE DEDICATED TO INVESTING IN OUR WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN AND FUTURE GENERATIONS -- WHO WILL LOOK BACK AND ASK WHAT WE DID TO HELP IMPROVE THEIR LIVES.

ONCE AGAIN, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MIAMI-DADE WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT FOR THE WORK THE EMPLOYEES HAVE DONE IN PREPARATION FOR TODAY'S GROUNDBREAKING, AND THE WORK THEY WILL DO IN THE FUTURE.

THANK YOU ALL AGAIN FOR COMING TODAY!

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

