

GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE!

HOW'S EVERYBODY DOING TODAY?

IT'S AN HONOR TO BE HERE AMONGST FRIENDS FOR THE GREATER MIAMI CHAMBER'S MOST IMPORTANT EVENT OF THE YEAR.

I KNOW THAT THE THEME OF THIS YEAR'S GOALS CONFERENCE IS "MAKE AN IMPACT." AND WHAT BETTER WAY CAN WE MAKE AN IMPACT IN OUR WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY OTHER THAN BY PLANNING AHEAD, SETTING GOALS AND WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THEM?

ALL OF YOU HERE PLAY A KEY ROLE IN MOVING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FORWARD, AND CONTINUING TO MAKE THIS THE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY. SO, THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE AND FOR TAKING AN INTEREST IN OUR COMMUNITY.

I ESPECIALLY WANT TO THANK CHRISTINE BARNEY FOR HER LEADERSHIP AS OUTGOING CHAIR. CHRISTINE, YOU'VE DONE AN OUTSTANDING JOB IN GUIDING THE CHAMBER TO WHERE WE ARE TODAY. AND FOR THAT, YOU DESERVE A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE.

I ALSO WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT TO WELCOME THE CHAMBER'S INCOMING CHAIRMAN, AND A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, DR. MARK ROSENBERG -- WHO IN ADDITION TO BEING THE INCOMING CHAIR, IS THE PRESIDENT OF FIU. DR. ROSENBERG, I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO WORK WITH YOU AND THE CHAMBER TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL MIAMIANS.

THAT'S REALLY WHY WE'RE ALL HERE TODAY, ISN'T IT? AND THAT'S MY OVERARCHING VISION AS MAYOR OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

I DECIDED TO RUN FOR MAYOR BECAUSE I WANTED TO LEAVE A BETTER MIAMI-DADE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN THAN WHAT WE HAVE TODAY. TOGETHER, I THINK WE'VE COME A LONG WAY.

BUT OUR WORK ISN'T DONE. AND THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT THIS MORNING: MY VISION FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND THE ROLE THAT YOU, AS MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER, CAN PLAY IN HELPING US MOVE OUR COMMUNITY FORWARD EVEN MORE.

THERE'S NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT MIAMI-DADE IS THE WORLD'S NEXT GREAT METROPOLITAN AREA. AND I THINK A BIG PART OF WHAT MAKES US GREAT IS OUR RESILIENCE.

IN FACT, JUST LAST MONTH, MIAMI-DADE WAS NAMED TO THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION'S 100 RESILIENT CITIES GLOBAL NETWORK.

WE WERE SELECTED FROM HUNDREDS OF APPLICANTS, AND THIS PRESTIGIOUS DESIGNATION ALSO MEANS THAT MIAMI-DADE WILL RECEIVE FUNDING TO DEVELOP AN ADAPTABLE RESILIENCE STRATEGY FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTY.

BECAUSE SOUTH FLORIDA IS GROUND ZERO FOR SEA-LEVEL RISE, WE'VE BEEN WORKING TOWARD ADDRESSING THIS CHALLENGE SINCE THE 1980s.

AND MOST RECENTLY, WE HIRED A CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER, AND BEGAN A MULTI-BILLION-DOLLAR INVESTMENT IN RENEWING AND STRENGTHENING OUR WATER-AND-SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE TO PREPARE FOR THE EFFECTS OF SEA-LEVEL RISE AND CLIMATE CHANGE. IMPLEMENTING ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE INTO

FUTURE PROJECTS IS NOT ONLY GOOD FOR OUR COMMUNITY, IT'S ALSO GOOD FOR BUSINESS.

BUT AS WE ALL KNOW, RESILIENCE IS ABOUT FACING ALL CHALLENGES, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHERS, HEAD-ON. IT'S ABOUT TACKLING THOSE ISSUES THAT TOUCH ALL ASPECTS OF OUR ECONOMY, AND THE LIVES OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RESIDENTS.

AND I HAVE A LOT OF GREAT NEWS TO SHARE ABOUT WHAT WE'RE DOING TO MAKE THIS COMMUNITY EVEN MORE RESILIENT, AND AN EVEN BETTER PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY.

JOBS ARE A BIG PRIORITY FOR ALL OF US, AND A BIG PART OF WHAT WILL KEEP OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN RIGHT HERE IN MIAMI-DADE.

AND WE CAN BE PROUD THAT, TOGETHER, WE'VE CREATED MORE THAN 148,000 PRIVATE-SECTOR JOBS IN OUR COMMUNITY. WE CAN ALSO BE PROUD THAT OUR OVERALL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS DOWN FROM AROUND 12 PERCENT WHEN I BECAME MAYOR, TO ABOUT 5.5 PERCENT TODAY.

NONE OF THIS COULD HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO GROWING YOUR BUSINESSES. SO, THANK YOU!

AND WITH THE OPENING OF THE EXPANDED PANAMA CANAL THIS MONTH, WE'LL BE BRINGING EVEN MORE BUSINESS AND JOBS TO MIAMI-DADE VIA PORTMIAMI. ONE KEY POINT: TOGETHER, WITH MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, OUR PORTS SUPPORT 500,000 JOBS IN OUR COUNTY! THAT'S WHY WE CONTINUE INVESTING IN THEM!

ALONG WITH LARRY WILLIAMS AND HIS TEAM AT THE BEACON COUNCIL, YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO WORKED TO DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMY EVEN MORE BY INVESTING IN FIELDS RANGING FROM CLEAN ENERGY AND GROUND TRANSPORTATION TO ART, FILM AND ENTERTAINMENT. THAT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKING MIAMI-DADE A GREAT PLACE TO WORK FOR ALL MIAMIANS.

AND THAT'S ALSO AN IMPORTANT POINT: WE NEED TO CREATE JOBS FOR ALL MIAMIANS.

BECAUSE WHILE WE'VE CUT OUR OVERALL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY MORE THAN HALF SINCE

2011, THERE ARE AREAS OF OUR COMMUNITY THAT CONTINUE TO HAVE HIGH LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

THAT'S WHY WE LAUNCHED EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE IN DECEMBER 2014. AND SINCE PROGRAM LAUNCH, WE'VE TRAINED 439 WORKERS AND PLACED 419 OF THOSE WORKERS WITH JOBS IN THE CONSTRUCTION, HOSPITALITY AND CULINARY INDUSTRIES.

IF YOU AREN'T INVOLVED WITH EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE YET, CONTACT MY OFFICE. THERE'S NO REASON THAT OUR COMMUNITY SHOULDN'T EMPLOY OUR RESIDENTS.

IN ADDITION TO CREATING JOBS FOR ALL MIAMIANS AND FURTHER DIVERSIFYING OUR ECONOMY, WE ARE CREATING A BETTER, MORE RESILIENT MIAMI-DADE BY ADDRESSING OUR COMMUNITY'S TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES. I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT TRANSPORTATION IS AMONG THE TOP CONCERNS OF MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND VISITORS ALIKE. AND THAT'S WHY

WE'RE TAKING A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO IMPROVING MOBILITY IN OUR COMMUNITY.

WE'VE HAD SOME EARLY SUCCESSES, LIKE THE METRORAIL EXPRESS TO AND FROM DOWNTOWN, IMPROVED SYNCHRONIZATION OF TRAFFIC SIGNALS ON SOME OF OUR MAJOR CORRIDORS, AND THE RECENT LEGALIZATION OF RIDING-SHARING SERVICES, LIKE UBER AND LYFT. NOW, WE'RE IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING THE "SMART" PLAN SO THAT SIX NEW RAIL LINES ARE EVENTUALLY BUILT.

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE IN MIAMI-DADE IS ALSO ABOUT CREATING A SAFER COMMUNITY. AND THAT'S AN AREA WHERE WE ABSOLUTELY MUST WORK TOGETHER. BECAUSE, AS YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD ME SAY BEFORE: IT TAKES ALL OF US TO PROTECT ALL OF US.

AND WHILE WE HAVE ONE OF THE LARGEST AND THE BEST POLICE DEPARTMENTS IN THE NATION, AND THE BEST TECHNOLOGY – INCLUDING BODY-WORN CAMERAS -- WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE A SAFER MIAMI-DADE FOR US ALL ... ESPECIALLY FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

YOUTH VIOLENCE IS A CRITICAL ISSUE FOR US. AND THAT'S WHY MIAMI-DADE POLICE, JUVENILE SERVICES AND PARKS ARE WORKING COLLABORATIVELY ON HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS THAT WILL KEEP OUR MOST VULNERABLE YOUTH AWAY FROM VIOLENCE, INCLUDING A RANGE OF MENTORING AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS, FAMILY-ORIENTED SERVICES, AFTER-SCHOOL AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

A FEW WEEKS AGO, I ALSO TOOK PART IN A PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE THE LAUNCH OF "CRIME STOPPERS KIDS." THIS PROGRAM WILL ALLOW EVERY SINGLE RESIDENT OF OUR COMMUNITY TO HELP FIGHT CRIME BY RAISING REWARD MONEY TO ENCOURAGE TIPS LEADING TO THE ARREST OF ANYONE WHO COMMITS A VIOLENT CRIME AGAINST A CHILD.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT ALL OF US IN THIS ROOM ARE ALREADY PLANNING AHEAD AND WORKING TOGETHER ON THESE AND OTHER ISSUES.

SO, I'M VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT OUR FUTURE AND WHAT WE WILL ACCOMPLISH AS WE CONTINUE TO

WORK TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY TO MAKE AN IMPACT.

LET ME ONCE AGAIN THANK THE CHAMBER AND ALL OF YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO DO THIS. AND THROUGH OUR EFFORTS, I KNOW THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WILL CONTINUE TO MOVE FORWARD AS A COMMUNITY WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL, AND AS A SAFE, RESILIENT, MOBILE PLACE WE CAN ALL BE PROUD TO CALL HOME.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME THIS MORNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

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

