

GOOD MORNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AND WELCOME!

MUY BUENOS DIAS A TODOS Y BIENVENIDOS!

BONJOUR ET BIENVENUE!

THANK YOU, ALEX, FOR THAT KIND INTRODUCTION.

I'M HONORED THAT ALL OF YOU ARE JOINING ME FOR MY FIRST
STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON JUST THE STATE OF COUNTY
GOVERNMENT, I'M GOING TO FOCUS ON THE STATE OF OUR ENTIRE
COMMUNITY.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN WELCOMING THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WHO ARE WITH US TODAY.

COMMISSIONERS, PLEASE STAND UP AND BE RECOGNIZED FOR YOUR
COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION TO OUR COMMUNITY.

PLEASE ALSO JOIN ME IN WELCOMING MY WIFE, LOURDES, AND OUR
GROWING FAMILY.

LOURDES AND I WILL BE CELEBRATING OUR 37TH WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY THIS JUNE.

MY FAMILY IS MY ROCK AND MY FOUNDATION.

THEY'VE GIVEN ME ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT EVERY STEP OF THE WAY, AND I LOVE THEM.

MI FAMILIA ES MI APOYO Y LA FUERZA MORAL. LOS QUIERO CON TODA MI ALMA.!

I ALSO WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE DISTINGUISHED MAYORS AND OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS FROM ACROSS MIAMI-DADE WHO ARE HERE TODAY...

...AS WELL AS THE MEMBERS OF OUR FOREIGN CONSULAR CORPS AND MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY.

AND WELCOME AND THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY, RELIGIOUS AND BUSINESS LEADERS, AS WELL.

YOU ARE THE JOB-CREATORS AND THE CAREGIVERS – THE BACKBONE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

I ALSO WANT TO PERSONALLY THANK OUR EMCEE THIS MORNING, ALEX VILLOCH.

ALEX HAS BEEN AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY FOR MANY YEARS IN BUSINESS, CIVIC AND CHARITABLE EFFORTS.

THANK YOU, ALEX!

THANKS TO DR. JAMES BUSH, AS WELL, WHO DELIVERED OUR INVOCATION THIS MORNING.

AND OF COURSE, THANKS TO THE MUSIC ENSEMBLE FROM THE MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, LED BY DR. EDUARDO CALLE.

THEY ARE THE "WORLD MUSIC 5"

AND THANKS TO CLAUDIA LOPEZ WHO SANG OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM.

THEY REPRESENT THE AMAZING TALENT WE HAVE IN OUR OWN COMMUNITY, AND THEY ALSO REPRESENT OUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE.

WEREN'T THEY TERRIFIC?

WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN CHALLENGING FOR ALL OF US WHO LIVE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

THAT'S ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR OUR ELDERLY AND SPECIAL NEEDS

RESIDENTS.

BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT BETTER DAYS LIE AHEAD FOR ALL OF US.

WHEN YOU ELECTED ME A FEW SHORT MONTHS AGO, IT WAS WITH A CLEAR MANDATE:

CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF THE COUNTY.

THE BACKLASH THAT PROMPTED LAST YEAR'S SHAKEUP OF COUNTY HALL WAS A SURPRISE TO NO ONE:

IN THE MIDST OF A CHALLENGING ECONOMY, JOB LOSSES, SHRINKING HOUSEHOLD INCOMES, AND FORECLOSURES, WE WERE SADDLED WITH HIGHER PROPERTY TAXES.

SO JUST DAYS AFTER TAKING OFFICE, I PROPOSED TO SLASH TAXES, ROLLING BACK THE 2010 TAX INCREASE, ALL WHILE PRESERVING ESSENTIAL SERVICES!

AND I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU COMMISSIONERS, FOR SUPPORTING THE TAX CUT.

AS YOU KNOW, THIS WAS NO EASY TASK.

CUTTING TAXES AND BALANCING THE BUDGET REQUIRED TOUGH DECISIONS.

CORTANDO LOS IMPUESTOS Y BALANCIANDO EL PRESUPUESTO NO HA SIDO FACIL.

WE CUT THE SIZE OF GOVERNMENT, WHILE PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY AND VITAL PROGRAMS FOR OUR NEEDIEST RESIDENTS:

CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY

...ESPECIALLY PROTECTING ELDERLY MEALS, WHICH OFTEN PROVIDE THE ONLY WARM MEAL OF THE DAY FOR THE MEMBERS OF OUR GREATEST GENERATION.

PROTEGIENDO LAS COMIDAS PARA LAS PERSONAS DE TERCERA EDAD HA SIDO UNA PRIORIDAD MIA

MUCHAS VECES, ESTE SERVICIO REPRESENTA LA ÚNICA COMIDA CALIENTE PARA MIEMBROS DE ESTA GRAN GENERACIÓN.

WE ALSO CALLED ON COUNTY EMPLOYEES TO MAKE A SHARED SACRIFICE, AND I AM PROUD TO SAY THAT THEY HAVE DONE THEIR PART.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE, ON DAY ONE I SLASHED MY OWN SALARY IN HALF, AND I CUT OVER A MILLION DOLLARS FROM MY BUDGET.

THOSE EMPLOYEES UNDER MY PURVIEW ALSO TOOK PAY CUTS BEGINNING LAST JULY.

WE NEGOTIATED NEW CONTRACTS WITH OUR TEN LABOR UNIONS, AS WELL.

AND I COMMEND THOSE MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY COMMISSION WHO SUPPORTED THE CONCESSIONS NEEDED TO BALANCE THE BUDGET, INSTEAD OF LAYING OFF HUNDREDS OF PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES.

ON BEHALF OF THE FAMILIES OF THOSE EMPLOYEES, I THANK YOU.

WHY WAS THIS SO IMPORTANT TO US?

BECAUSE WE NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE ARE A PART OF THIS COMMUNITY, AND GOVERNMENT IS HERE TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

AS YOUR MAYOR, WE WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE ON WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE DO IT.

I AM PROUD OF THE DEDICATED GROUP OF PROFESSIONALS WHO

HAVE ANSWERED THE CALL TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN GIVING THEM A WELL-DESERVED ROUND OF APPLAUSE.

AS YOU'VE SEEN, I HAVE BEGUN THE PROCESS OF SHAKING UP THE COUNTY BUREAUCRACY, STARTING BY SLASHING THE NUMBER OF COUNTY DEPARTMENTS FROM 42 TO 26.

FOR TOO LONG, THIS ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN GROWING BIGGER, MORE COMPLEX AND MORE EXPENSIVE TO OPERATE.

WE HAVE HAD TO FOOT A GROWING BILL, AND IN RETURN WE'VE BEEN GIVEN A MAZE OF GOVERNMENT RED TAPE.

THAT IS ENDING.

WE ARE NOW WELL ON OUR WAY TO DELIVERING A COUNTY GOVERNMENT THAT WE CAN AFFORD.

I'VE MADE CLEAR FROM THE START, THIS PROCESS WON'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT

BUT AS WE MOVE INTO 2012, YOU WILL SEE THE SAVINGS

ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REORGANIZATION.

COMMISSIONERS, IN THE COMING WEEKS, MY ADMINISTRATION WILL BE BRIEFING EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU ON THE REORGANIZATION

THIS REORGANIZATION WILL SAVE THE PEOPLE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY OVER \$30 MILLION THIS YEAR AND WILL SAVE THEM IN EXCESS OF \$40 MILLION NEXT YEAR.

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BUT CONTROLLING COSTS IS ONLY ONE OF MY PRIORITIES.

ALLOW ME TO MAKE ONE POINT VERY CLEAR:

THIS YEAR, 2012, MY TOP PRIORITY IS JOB CREATION.

LA CREACIÓN DE NUEVOS EMPLEOS EN NUESTRA COMUNIDAD ES MI PRIORIDAD.

MY PLAN IS TO ATTRACT NEW INVESTMENT AND CREATE HIGH-PAYING, QUALITY JOBS.

AND HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THIS?

WE'RE GOING TO DO IT WITH A REORGANIZED COUNTY GOVERNMENT,
STARTING WITH:

- AN EXPEDITED PERMITTING PROCESS;
- ELIMINATING OUTDATED REGULATIONS
- A STREAMLINED, CUSTOMER-FRIENDLY ORGANIZATION;
- AND LESS RED TAPE...

IN FACT, I'VE INVITED ALL OF OUR CITY LEADERS TO MEET ON MARCH
7TH TO GET THEIR COOPERATION ON HOW WE CAN BETTER ATTRACT
JOBS AND CUT THAT RED TAPE THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY.

I'M SURE YOU WOULD AGREE THAT IF YOU COULD GO TO JUST ONE
PLACE TO GET YOUR PERMITS, LIFE WOULD BE A LOT EASIER.

AND I'M CONVINCED THESE CHANGES WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE
JOB-CREATORS TO CREATE JOBS.

SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS IN OUR COMMUNITY CONSTANTLY
REMIND ME THAT GOVERNMENT DOESN'T CREATE JOBS.

BY TAKING THESE CONCRETE STEPS, WE CAN HELP CREATE THE
CONDITIONS FOR JOB GROWTH AND RESTORE ECONOMIC
PROSPERITY TO OUR COMMUNITY.

AS I SAID, WE'RE WORKING NOW TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS THAT
LIMIT JOB GROWTH

BUT GOING FORWARD, TO HAVE THE KIND OF ECONOMICALLY VIABLE
COMMUNITY THAT WE ALL WANT, WE ARE PARTNERING WITH OUR
FRIENDS IN BUSINESS AND EDUCATION.

THAT'S WHY I CO-CHAIR – ALONG WITH ALEX VILLOCH AND ADOLFO
HENRIQUES – THE ONE COMMUNITY ONE GOAL INITIATIVE.

IT'S A ROADMAP FOR OUR FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH.

EARLIER THIS MONTH, WE JOINED OUR ECONOMIC PARTNERS AT THE
BEACON COUNCIL TO ANNOUNCE TARGETED INDUSTRIES THAT HAVE
THE HIGHEST POTENTIAL FOR JOB-CREATION AND NEW INVESTMENT
IN OUR COMMUNITY

SOME ARE FAMILIAR AND OTHERS ARE NOT.

THEY INCLUDE:

- LIFE SCIENCES & HEALTHCARE
- INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
- INTERNATIONAL BANKING & FINANCE
- CREATIVE DESIGN

- HOSPITALITY & TOURISM
- AVIATION
- AND TRADE & LOGISTICS

EDUCATION IS THE FOUNDATION FOR ALL OF THESE TARGETED INDUSTRIES, SO IN THE COMING WEEKS WE WILL ISSUE A REPORT ON THE STATE OF OUR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

AND IN MAY, WE WILL UNVEIL OUR JOB-GROWTH GAMEPLAN.

AND WHILE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS A STRONG LIST OF TARGETED INDUSTRIES TO CREATE JOBS AND NEW INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMUNITY, EVERYONE KNOWS THAT WE'RE ALSO BEING TARGETED BY AN INDUSTRY:

DESTINATION RESORT GAMING HAS BEEN A HOT TOPIC IN OUR COMMUNITY FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS.

AND REGARDLESS OF WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE DECIDED IN TALLAHASSEE, MY POSITION IS CLEAR:

I BELIEVE THAT THE PEOPLE – NOT POLITICIANS – HAVE THE RIGHT TO DECIDE.

ALL TOO OFTEN, COMMUNITY-ALTERING DECISIONS HAVE BYPASSED THE PEOPLE, AND HAVE BEEN LEFT TO THE SELECT FEW.

I'M COMMITTED TO FIGHTING FOR THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO DECIDE WHAT IS BEST FOR THEIR COMMUNITY.

GOING BACK TO OUR FOCUS ON JOB CREATION, THERE ARE ALREADY REASONS FOR CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM ON THE JOBS FRONT.

CONSIDER THIS:

- NON-AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT HAS GROWN IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BY OVER 18,000 JOBS IN THE PAST YEAR.
- WE ALSO SAW THE SECOND LARGEST MONTHLY JOB INCREASE IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA THIS PAST DECEMBER.
- AND UNEMPLOYMENT NUMBERS ARE NOW WELL BELOW THEIR PEAK OF OVER 14%

JOB CREATION IS NOT WHERE IT NEEDS TO BE YET, BUT WE ARE MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

HERE ARE SOME SPECIFIC REASONS FOR OPTIMISM:

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN AUDREY EDMONSON'S LEADERSHIP HAS HELPED ENSURE THAT THE U.M. LIFE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY PARK IS

THRIVING AMIDST A GROWING HEALTHCARE DISTRICT.

AND HATS OFF TO PRESIDENT DONNA SHALALA, THE UNIVERSITY'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND ITS CHAIRMAN LEONARD ABESS FOR POSSESSING THE VISION AND LEADERSHIP TO PUSH THIS PROJECT FROM CONCEPT TO REALITY!

IT'S ALSO IMPORTANT TO MENTION THAT CARLOS MIGOYA AND THE FINANCIAL RECOVERY BOARD ARE LEADING JACKSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL BACK ONTO A SUSTAINABLE PATH.

THE DIFFICULT CHOICES THAT ARE BEING MADE AT JACKSON NOW WILL ENSURE THE FUTURE VIABILITY OF OUR PUBLIC HOSPITAL.

AND THERE'S NO GREATER CHAMPION FOR THE WORLD-CLASS HEALTHCARE AVAILABLE AT JACKSON THAN COMMISSIONER SALLY HEYMAN.

ANOTHER SIGN FOR OPTIMISM IS THAT OUR AVIATION INDUSTRY IS BOOMING, WITH A RECORD OF MORE THAN 38 MILLION PASSENGERS TRAVELING THROUGH MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN 2011.

2012 HAS STARTED OFF WITH A BANG:

ON JANUARY 2ND, WE SET AN ALL-TIME SINGLE-DAY RECORD WITH MORE THAN 135,000 PASSENGERS.

AND WE'RE HUNGRY FOR MORE:

COMMISSIONER DENNIS MOSS, I SHARE YOUR VISION OF BRINGING A WORLD-CLASS AIR SHOW TO HOMESTEAD AIR RESERVE BASE

IN FACT, I HAD A CHANCE TO SPEAK DIRECTLY TO PRESIDENT OBAMA ABOUT THE AIR SHOW JUST LAST WEEK.

AND WE'LL CONTINUE TO WORK TO GET THE FEDERAL SUPPORT WE NEED TO LAND THAT SHOW.

I'M ALSO COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH YOU, COMMISSIONER LYNDA BELL AND COLONEL LINDBERG TO EXPAND USES AT THE BASE.

AS I MENTION OUR AIR RESERVE BASE, LET'S RECOGNIZE OUR MILITARY FAMILIES FOR THEIR CONTINUED SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY.

I KNOW THAT I SPEAK FOR COMMISSIONER PEPE DIAZ AND ALL COMMISSIONERS WHEN I SAY THAT OUR COMMUNITY APPRECIATES YOUR HARD WORK AND SACRIFICE!

AND BETWEEN THE AIRPORT AND THE SEAPORT, INTERNATIONAL

TRADE IS ALIVE AND WELL IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

CONSIDER THIS:

- AT M.I.A., FREIGHT SHIPMENTS GREW AND MATCHED THEIR ALL-TIME RECORD
- AND CONTAINER TRAFFIC AT PORT MIAMI SURGED THIS PAST FISCAL YEAR

THE 2035 PORT MASTER PLAN IS CHARTING A CLEAR COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

AND MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW AT PORT MIAMI ARE CREATING JOBS AND WILL ONLY GROW OUR INTERNATIONAL TRADE BUSINESS

AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THE COMMISSION – AND ESPECIALLY COMMISSIONERS REBECCA SOSA AND BRUNO BARREIRO – TO ENSURE OUR VITAL ECONOMIC ENGINES CONTINUE TO THRIVE.

LET'S NOT FORGET OUR OTHER KEY INDUSTRIES.

TOURISM CONTINUES TO BE A BRIGHT SPOT AND A JOB-CREATOR.

THE GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU IS DOING OUTSTANDING WORK.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SAW A RECORD NUMBER OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS IN 2011 WHO SPENT MORE THAN \$19 BILLION IN OUR COMMUNITY...

...HELPING TO SUPPORT 109,000 LOCAL JOBS, WHICH IS A 3% INCREASE OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

OUR CRUISE TRAFFIC IS GOING STRONG:

FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR, MORE THAN 4 MILLION PASSENGERS PASSED THROUGH OUR SEAPORT.

THAT MAKES US NUMBER ONE IN THE WORLD.

BUT WE'RE STILL NOT SATISFIED.

THIS YEAR, THREE NEW CRUISE LINES HAVE SIGNED UP TO SAIL FROM PORT MIAMI:

DISNEY, M.S.C., AND REGENT SEVEN SEAS

IN ADDITION, CARNIVAL CRUISE LINE'S NEWEST SHIP THE CARNIVAL BREEZE, IS COMING TO PORT MIAMI.

IMAGINE THE POSITIVE IMPACT THESE SHIPS WILL HAVE!

AGRICULTURE IS ALIVE AND WELL IN OUR COMMUNITY, TOO.

OUR FARMERS AND RANCHERS WORK SOME 60,000 ACRES OF LAND, PRODUCING FOOD THAT IS SERVED ON DINNER TABLES ACROSS THE NATION...

...AND CREATING A \$2.7 BILLION ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT IN THE PROCESS.

AND I JOIN SENATOR JAVIER SOUTO IN SUPPORTING THIS IMPORTANT SECTOR OF OUR COMMUNITY.

AS COMMISSIONER JEAN MONESTIME CONSTANTLY REMINDS US, SMALL BUSINESSES CONTINUE TO MAKE UP THE BULK - AND THE BACKBONE - OF OUR LOCAL ECONOMY, DESPITE THE CHALLENGING ECONOMIC TIMES.

FROM FAMILY-OWNED RESTAURANTS, TO BARBER SHOPS, AND COURIER SERVICES - IT'S OUR MOM & POP BUSINESSES THAT MAKE THIS COMMUNITY GO.

OUR ARTS AND CULTURE SCENE ALSO CONTINUES TO THRIVE.

NON-PROFIT ARTS AND CULTURAL BUSINESSES EMPLOY MORE THAN 22,000 PEOPLE LOCALLY AND HAVE A \$1 BILLION ANNUAL IMPACT ON OUR ECONOMY.

WE ARE ONE OF THE WORLD'S NEWEST AND MOST DYNAMIC CULTURAL CENTERS.

OVER 50,000 VISITORS CAME HERE JUST A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO FOR THE 10TH ANNUAL ARTS WEEK MIAMI, FEATURING ART BASEL AND 17 SATELLITE ART FAIRS.

NEW SCIENCE AND ART MUSEUMS ARE RISING ON BISCAYNE BAY, AND HISTORY MIAMI IS EXPANDING, AS WELL.

AND IN MIAMI'S HISTORIC OVERTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD, DR. DOROTHY JENKINS FIELDS IS PUSHING THE BLACK ARCHIVES CENTER TOWARDS COMPLETION AND ENSURING THAT A CENTRAL PART OF OUR COMMUNITY'S HISTORY IS NEVER FORGOTTEN.

THE ONE COMMUNITY ONE GOAL INITIATIVE ALSO PLACES A HIGH VALUE ON EDUCATION, AND ENSURING THAT WE PRODUCE THE EDUCATED WORKFORCE NEEDED TO FILL THE JOBS THAT WE AIM TO BRING TO OUR COUNTY.

I HAVE SEVERAL EDUCATORS IN MY FAMILY, INCLUDING MY WIFE,
LOURDES

SHE SERVES AS A CONSTANT REMINDER TO ME OF JUST HOW
IMPORTANT EDUCATING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE IS.

THAT'S WHY I'M ANNOUNCING TODAY THE FORMATION OF THE
MIAMI-DADE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP.

WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH SOUTH FLORIDA WORKFORCE, WE
ARE MAKING \$1.5 MILLION DOLLARS AVAILABLE TO COLLEGE
STUDENTS FROM DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT
MIAMI-DADE...

...SO THAT THEY CAN PARTICIPATE IN PAID INTERNSHIPS WITH
LOCAL BUSINESSES THIS SUMMER.

THE PARTNERSHIP WILL PROVIDE LOCAL BUSINESSES THE
OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE OUR BRIGHT YOUNG STUDENTS WORK
WITHIN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS.

CONNECTING OUR STUDENTS TO OUR PARTNERS IN THE PRIVATE
AND NON-PROFIT SECTORS IS KEY TO GROWING JOBS AND ENDING
THE BRAIN-DRAIN OF OUR MOST TALENTED STUDENTS LEAVING OUR
COMMUNITY.

THAT'S WHY MY ADMINISTRATION WILL EXPAND OUR CURRENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS TO INCLUDE COLLEGE STUDENTS WORKING CLOSELY WITH OUR HIGHEST COUNTY EXECUTIVES.

COMMISSIONER BARBARA JORDAN, I KNOW YOU'VE ALWAYS CHAMPIONED SOUTH FLORIDA WORKFORCE, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU ON THESE IMPORTANT EFFORTS.

SUPPORTING EDUCATION IS CRITICAL FOR OUR COMMUNITY, SO LET ME TAKE A MOMENT TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR COMMUNITY'S EDUCATION LEADERS WHO ARE HERE TODAY.

- MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE PRESIDENT EDUARDO PADRON
- AND F.I.U. PRESIDENT MARK ROSENBERG

LET'S GIVE THEM ALL A ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

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WHILE JOB CREATION IS MY TOP PRIORITY, THERE IS ANOTHER CRITICAL TASK BEFORE US:

NOW IS THE TIME FOR COMPREHENSIVE COUNTY REFORM AND CONTINUING TO RESTORE THE PUBLIC TRUST.

IT'S TIME TO BE BOLD.

IT'S TIME TO DO RIGHT THING.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, I SUPPORT PLACING 8-YEAR TERM LIMITS FOR COMMISSIONERS ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT.

PRIMERO QUE NADA, YO APOYO LOS LIMITES DE TERMINO DE 8 AÑOS PARA LOS COMISIONADOS EN LA BOLETA DE NOVIEMBRE.

IT'S A VITAL REFORM THAT I HAVE BEEN PUSHING FOR SINCE 2007, AS A COMMISSIONER AND ACTIVE MEMBER THE CHARTER REVIEW TASK FORCE.

OUR RESIDENTS WANTED TERM LIMITS BACK THEN, AND THEY WANT THEM NOW.

WHETHER BY CITIZEN-INITIATED PETITION, OR THE COMMISSION FOLLOWS THE LEAD OF COMMISSIONERS LYNDA BELL AND REBECCA SOSA AND PLACES THE QUESTION ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT...

...OUR VOTERS HAVE THE RIGHT TO DECIDE ON TERM LIMITS FOR COMMISSIONERS ONCE AND FOR ALL.

NO CONDITIONS, NO TRICKY LANGUAGE – JUST 8-YEAR TERM LIMITS. PERIOD.

NEXT, I CHALLENGE THIS COMMISSION TO REPEAL THE OBSTACLES IT PLACED ON RESIDENTS WHO ARE PETITIONING THEIR COUNTY GOVERNMENT -

THAT INCLUDES THE ONEROUS ONE-SIGNATURE PER PAGE RULE.

COMMISSIONER STEVE BOVO, I APPLAUD YOUR EFFORTS TO PUSH THESE REFORMS.

THE DECKS HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY STACKED AGAINST THE PEOPLE.

SO LET'S FIX THE PETITION PROCESS.

WE NEED MORE THAN JUST THESE IMPORTANT REFORMS.

WE NEED THE COMMISSION ON ETHICS AND THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL - THE WATCHDOGS WHO ROOT OUT PUBLIC WASTE, FRAUD AND CORRUPTION - TO BE FREE OF POLITICAL INTERFERENCE.

IN NOVEMBER, LET'S EMPOWER THESE FUNDAMENTAL INSTITUTIONS THROUGH OUR CHARTER IN ORDER TO MAKE OUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT MORE TRANSPARENT.

AND AS CRITICAL AS JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH ARE TO OUR COUNTY, THEY CANNOT – AND WILL NOT – COME AT THE EXPENSE OF OUR MOST TREASURED RESOURCE – THE ENVIRONMENT.

NOT ON MY WATCH.

WE NEED TO PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT AND PUT A LID ON THE URBAN SPRAWL THAT

- CHOKES OUR ROADWAYS,
- OVERWHELMS OUR SCHOOLS,
- STRAINS OUR LIMITED RESOURCES,
- THREATENS OUR NATURAL TREASURES
- AND ULTIMATELY IMPACTS OUR QUALITY OF LIFE.

WE MUST PROTECT AND DEFEND THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY.

COMMISSIONER XAVIER SUAREZ IS ON THE RIGHT PATH, BUT A MORATORIUM IS NOT ENOUGH.

WE NEED A NEW APPROACH TO CONTROLLING URBAN SPRAWL AND PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT:

CHANGE THE CHARTER TO REQUIRE THAT ANY MOVEMENT OF THE CURRENT LINE MUST BE APPROVED BY AN EXTRAORDINARY MAJORITY OF THE BOARD, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CHARTER REVIEW TASK FORCE.

ONCE AND FOR ALL, THIS ENSURES THAT FUTURE COMMISSIONS AND FUTURE MAYORS HAVE THE STRICTEST STANDARDS FOR MAKING ANY CHANGES TO THE LINE.

CHAIRMAN JOE MARTINEZ, YOU ARE TO BE COMMENDED FOR CALLING THE MEETING ON MARCH 8TH TO DISCUSS CHARTER REFORMS

AND I ENCOURAGE YOU TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PUBLIC TO PARTICIPATE AND SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON THESE PROPOSED REFORMS.

WHEN I TOOK THE OATH OF OFFICE JUST LAST JULY, I PLEDGED THAT I WOULD WORK TO RESTORE TRUST IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND LEAD US IN A NEW DIRECTION.

AND I ALSO ASSURED OUR RESIDENTS THAT MY DECISIONS WOULD BE GUIDED BY ONE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE:

'DOING WHAT IS BEST FOR ALL OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.'

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE STATE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS IMPROVING, AND THERE'S REASON FOR CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM IN OUR COMMUNITY AS WE MOVE TOWARDS A BRIGHTER FUTURE.

SEÑORES Y SEÑORAS, EL ESTADO DEL CONDADO ESTA MEJORANDO.

IN EIGHT SHORT MONTHS, YOU'VE SEEN THE KINDS OF REFORMS THAT TYPICALLY TAKE YEARS TO COME ABOUT, IF THEY'RE EVEN ATTEMPTED.

- CUTTING TAXES;
- OBTAINING NEEDED CONCESSIONS FROM OUR LABOR UNIONS;
- CUTTING GOVERNMENT WASTE, WHILE MAINTAINING VITAL SERVICES;
- SHAKING UP THIS GOVERNMENT;
- PUSHING FOR OVERDUE REFORMS;
- AND CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR MY TOP PRIORITY: JOB CREATION.

AND LET ME SAY THIS:

THERE'S MUCH CRITICAL WORK TO BE DONE IN THE YEAR AHEAD,
AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO BETTER THE LIVES OF OUR RESIDENTS
IS TOO GREAT TO BE DERAILED BY POLITICS.

AS LEADERS, LET'S SET ASIDE OUR DIFFERENCES AND WORK FOR
THE GOOD OF ALL.

IT'S NO SECRET THAT THIS IS AN ELECTION YEAR, AND THE TIME FOR
POLITICS WILL COME.

BUT THAT DAY IS NOT YET HERE.

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE TODAY, AND THANK YOU FOR
ENTRUSTING ME TO LEAD THIS GREAT COMMUNITY.

I LOOK FORWARD TO SERVING AS YOUR MAYOR FOR MANY, MANY
YEARS TO COME!

THANK YOU AND MAY GOD BLESS AMERICA, OUR STATE AND THIS
COUNTY, AND MAY GOD BLESS EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU!

MUCHAS GRACIAS! Y QUE DIOS LOS BENDIGA!

MERCI! QUE DIEU VOUS BENISSE!