

**SOTC SPEECH 2020 – FROST MUSEUM – TUES. 1.14.20, 10 A.M.**

**GOOD MORNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AND WELCOME!**

***¡MUY BUENOS DÍAS A TODOS Y BIENVENIDOS!***

***BONJOUR ET BIENVENUE!***

**THANK YOU, CHAIRWOMAN EDMONSON, FOR THAT WARM INTRODUCTION, AND FOR WELCOMING US TO THIS TECHNOLOGICAL GEM IN THE HEART OF DISTRICT THREE.**

**I AM HONORED THAT SO MANY OF YOU ARE HERE FOR MY FINAL “STATE OF THE COUNTY” ADDRESS.**

**I WANT TO START BY ACKNOWLEDGING SOME VERY IMPORTANT PEOPLE.**

**THANKS GO TO PHILLIP AND PATRICIA FROST AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR HOSTING US AT THE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE. THIS IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO SHOWCASE THE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIVE THINKING THAT HAVE LED TO OUR COUNTY'S SUCCESS IN THE PAST EIGHT YEARS.**

**THE FROST MUSEUM AND THE PEREZ ART MUSEUM MIAMI, RIGHT NEXT DOOR, ARE JUST TWO EXAMPLES OF OUR**

**COUNTY'S MANY GREAT CULTURAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS.**

**ON A PERSONAL NOTE, I OWE MY PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF MY WIFE, LOURDES, AND OUR ENTIRE FAMILY. YOU HAVE BEEN THERE FOR ME – RIGHT BY MY SIDE, EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.**

**MY CHILDREN: CJ, JULIO AND LULI, AND THEIR SPOUSES, TANIA, BARBIE AND DANNY**

**MY SISTER, MITZI ANN MCKEON AND HER HUSBAND CHRIS MCKEON**

**MY DAD CARLOS SENIOR**

**AND, WATCHING OVER US FROM HEAVEN, MY MOTHER MITZI**

**I CAN'T FORGET MY MOTHER-IN-LAW, ROSA AMALIA PORTELA**

**AND MY SISTER-IN-LAW, SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER MARI TERE ROJAS, HER HUSBAND RICK, MY NEPHEWS RICKY AND CHRIS, AND MY NIECE NICKY.**

**PLUS, MY WONDERFUL GRANDKIDS:**

**ALEXIS, DANNY, LUCAS, AVA, MARCUS AND MICHAEL, WHO PLEDGED OUR FLAG TODAY.**

**MI FAMILIA ES MI APOYO. LOS QUIERO CON TODA MI ALMA.**

**MY FAMILY IS MY FOUNDATION. THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.**

**THERE'S ANOTHER IMPORTANT GROUP TO THANK: THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS. WITHOUT THEIR SUPPORT – AND SOMETIMES THEY WILL NUDGE ME IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION – WE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH SO MUCH FOR OUR RESIDENTS IN THE PAST EIGHT YEARS TO MOVE OUR COUNTY FORWARD.**

**AND MY SINCERE APPRECIATION TO OUR DISTINGUISHED MAYORS, CITY COMMISSIONERS, SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS, INCLUDING CHAIRWOMAN PERLA TABARES HANTMAN, AND JUDICIAL OFFICERS, ALONG WITH OUR CIVIC, RELIGIOUS, BUSINESS AND UNION LEADERS.**

**WE HAVE ACHIEVED MANY GREAT THINGS BY PUTTING DIFFERENCES ASIDE AND WORKING TOGETHER.**

**WE ARE GOING TO TAKE A WHIRLWIND TOUR OF WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE'RE HEADING. FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS AND GET READY!**

**BEFORE WE FAST FORWARD, LET'S LOOK BACK A BIT TO UNDERSTAND HOW FAR WE'VE TRAVELLED TOGETHER.**

**IN MY FIRST STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS IN 2012, WE WERE FACING TOUGH TIMES.**

**HOUSING PRICES HAD PLUMMETED, FORECLOSURES WERE SKY-ROCKETING IN ALL OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, TOURISM WAS STRUGGLING, OUR PUBLIC HOSPITAL WAS IN THE RED, AND WE HAD A BRAIN DRAIN, WITH YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING FOR TECH JOBS IN NEW YORK AND SILICON VALLEY.**

**IN SHORT, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WAS IN A HORRIBLE PLACE FINANCIALLY, WITH THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE HITTING A STAGGERING 12 PERCENT.**

**FAST FORWARD TO 2020, AND MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S ECONOMY NOW IS BOOMING, OUR REAL ESTATE MARKET IS ROBUST, AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE STANDS BELOW 3 PERCENT – WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY FULL EMPLOYMENT. THE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN OUR COUNTY HAS GONE UP ALMOST 20 PERCENT FROM A DECADE AGO, TO MORE THAN \$52,000 TODAY.**

**WE ACHIEVED ALL THESE ECONOMIC GAINS THROUGH THE HARD WORK OF OUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS AND NUMEROUS COMMUNITY LEADERS AND LABOR PARTNERS.**

**TOGETHER, WE WORKED OUR WAY OUT OF THE FINANCIAL MESS WE HAD INHERITED.**

**AND THERE WAS SHARED SACRIFICE AMONG OUR COUNTY EMPLOYEES. TO THEM I SAY: I AM HONORED TO WORK WITH YOU. WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE ALL WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT YOUR COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC SERVICE.**

**LET'S GIVE THEM A ROUND OF APPLAUSE.**

**TODAY, I AM PROUD TO SAY THAT THE STATE OF OUR COUNTY IS STABLE AND STRONG, AND MIAMI-DADE'S FUTURE IS BRIGHT!**

**TODO LO QUE HEMOS PODIDO HACER EN LOS ÚLTIMOS OCHO AÑOS ME DA MUCHO ORGULLO. TENEMOS UN FUTURO BRILLANTE!**

**ON THE BUDGET AND FINANCIAL FRONT, I HAVE TO GIVE SPECIAL THANKS TO MY ADMINISTRATION'S DYNAMIC, COST-CUTTING DUO:**

**DEPUTY MAYOR AND C-F-O ED MARQUEZ**

**AND DEPUTY MAYOR AND BUDGET DIRECTOR JENNIFER MOON.**

**ED AND JENN, YOUR LEADERSHIP TO GET MIAMI-DADE'S FINANCIAL HOUSE IN ORDER SET THE STAGE FOR ALL WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO TO GROW AND DIVERSIFY MIAMI-DADE'S ECONOMY.**

**FOR STARTERS, WE CUT MORE THAN \$400 MILLION FROM THE COUNTY BUDGET. WE ALSO SLASHED THE NUMBER OF COUNTY DEPARTMENTS FROM 42 TO 26, AND WE CUT NEARLY 1,500 COUNTY POSITIONS.**

**WE TURNED THE COUNTY'S "FINANCIAL TITANIC" AROUND WITH STRATEGIES TO CREATE MORE JOBS, GROW THE TECH INDUSTRY, PROMOTE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND CUT GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY AND RED TAPE.**

**AND WE DID ALL THIS WHILE ALSO CUTTING TAXES TO A HISTORIC LOW.**

**IN FACT, WE MADE THE LARGEST TAX CUT IN COUNTY HISTORY.**

**HICIMOS EL RECORTE DE IMPUESTOS MAS GRANDE EN LA HISTORIA DEL CONDADO.**

**SINCE 2011, WE HAVE SAVED HOMEOWNERS ON AVERAGE MORE THAN \$1,700 ON THEIR TAX BILLS, WHICH ADDS UP TO \$1.8 BILLION IN SAVINGS.AND WE ACHIEVED THIS WHILE EXPANDING COUNTY SERVICES TO RESIDENTS.**

**SINCE 2011, WE'VE ALSO SAVED TAXPAYERS \$1.8 BILLION IN INTEREST COSTS OVER THE LIFE OF THE BONDS ISSUED.**

**JUST LAST YEAR, THE COUNTY HAD FIVE REFUNDING BOND ISSUANCES THAT GENERATED \$203 MILLION IN GROSS DEBT SERVICE SAVINGS.**

**AND OVER AT JACKSON, THANKS TO MONUMENTAL WORK LED BY PRESIDENT AND C-E-O CARLOS MIGOYA, WE SUCCESSFULLY REORGANIZED OUR PUBLIC HOSPITAL.**

**JACKSON HAS NOW BEEN IN THE BLACK FOR EIGHT CONSECUTIVE YEARS.**

**AND NEXT MONTH WE WILL OPEN THE MIAMI PROJECT TO CURE PARALYSIS AT U-HEALTH / JACKSON MEMORIAL. THIS**

**WILL BE THE NATION'S MOST SOPHISTICATED  
REHABILITATION CENTER TO TREAT SPINAL AND BRAIN  
INJURIES.**

**ONE OF THE KEYS TO OUR ECONOMY'S SUCCESS HAS BEEN  
THE BEACON COUNCIL'S "ONE COMMUNITY ONE GOAL"  
INITIATIVE, WHICH I'VE CO-CHAIRLED SINCE 2011 WHEN WE  
RE-LAUNCHED THIS GREAT INITIATIVE.**

**"ONE COMMUNITY ONE GOAL" HAS FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING  
SEVEN KEY SECTORS OF OUR ECONOMY. IT HAS ALSO  
STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTRACTING, DEVELOPING  
AND RETAINING TOP TALENT.**

**UNDER THE STRATEGIC VISION OF BEACON COUNCIL  
PRESIDENT AND C-E-O MICHAEL FINNEY, OUR COUNTY ADDED  
ALMOST 2 MILLION SQUARE FEET OF NEW CONSTRUCTION IN  
54 PROJECTS THAT BROUGHT IN MORE THAN \$820 MILLION  
LAST YEAR.**

**THIS IS THE LARGEST AMOUNT OF NEW CAPITAL  
INVESTMENT IN THE 34-YEAR HISTORY OF THE BEACON  
COUNCIL. BEST OF ALL, IT HAS CREATED NEARLY 3,000  
LOCAL JOBS, WITH 58 PERCENT OF THESE JOBS IN URBAN  
PRIORITY AREAS.**



**WE ARE MOVING FAST IN THE TECH FIELD AND IN LEVERAGING OUR SUNSHINE TO PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT.**

**PARTNERING WITH THE COUNTY, FLORIDA POWER AND LIGHT OPENED THE NEW “MIAMI-DADE SOLAR ENERGY CENTER” IN SOUTH DADE WITH 300,000 SOLAR PANELS LAST FEBRUARY.**

**AND WE WILL SOON UNVEIL FPL'S NEW FLOATING SOLAR PANELS ON THE LAKE RIGHT NEXT TO MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. THEY ARE A GREAT SOURCE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY, AND THEY WILL GIVE MIAMI-DADE A REALLY COOL, HIGH-TECH VIBE WHEN TRAVELERS FLYING THROUGH M-I-A SEE THESE SOLAR PANELS FROM THE AIR.**

**ANOTHER HIGH-TECH BOON FOR MIAMI-DADE THAT WE'VE SUPPORTED SINCE DAY ONE IS THE ANNUAL E-MERGE CONFERENCE. IT HAS BROUGHT MAJOR GLOBAL INVESTORS TO OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES – HEAVY HITTERS, LIKE SOFT-BANK AND STEVE CASE'S REVOLUTION GROWTH FUND.**

**THE COUNTY'S GROWING DOMINANCE IN THE TECH SECTOR PROMPTED “INC.” MAGAZINE TO NAME MIAMI-DADE AMONG THE TOP 10 PLACES IN THE NATION FOR START-UP ACTIVITY IN ITS ANNUAL “SURGE CITIES” LIST.**

**THE JOB GENERATORS WE HAVE CREATED SPAN A WIDE RANGE OF FIELDS.**

**IN MIAMI LAKES, THE \$4 BILLION “AMERICAN DREAM ENTERTAINMENT AND SHOPPING COMPLEX” WILL GENERATE 25,000 CONSTRUCTION JOBS AND PROVIDE AT LEAST 14,500 JOBS WHEN IT'S BUILT OUT.**

**AND AMAZON'S NEW FULFILLMENT CENTER IN COMMISSIONER BARBARA JORDAN'S DISTRICT IN OPA-LOCKA ALREADY EMPLOYS MORE THAN 1,500 WORKERS.**

**THESE ARE GOOD-PAYING JOBS WITH HEALTH INSURANCE AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS.**

**WE HAVE ALSO HELPED NEARLY 3,000 PEOPLE GET TRAINING AND FIND JOBS THROUGH OUR COUNTY'S “EMPLOY MIAMI DADE” INITIATIVE.**

**LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, WE ARE WORKING WITH M-I-T AND LOCAL UNIVERSITIES, HEALTH-CARE PROVIDERS AND BUSINESS LEADERS TO DEVELOP TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES THAT WILL REVOLUTIONIZE HEALTH CARE IN OUR COUNTY.**

**THERE WILL BE MORE TO SHARE IN THE COMING WEEKS ABOUT THIS FANTASTIC COLLABORATION WITH M-I-T AND OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS.**

**TECHNOLOGY ISN'T ONLY ABOUT SMART PHONES AND APPS OR – MY FAVORITE – THE ELECTRIC VERTICAL-LIFT VEHICLES OR “FLYING CARS” THAT ARE BEING DEVELOPED RIGHT NOW AS WE SPEAK.**

**NO, TECHNOLOGY IS MUCH MORE THAN THAT. AND IT TOUCHES ALL ASPECTS OF OUR LIVES, EVEN OUR FOOD SUPPLY.**

**DID YOU EVER IMAGINE THAT SOUTH FLORIDA COULD SERVE AS THE WORLD'S LARGEST SITE FOR SALMON PRODUCTION?**

**WELL, WE SOON WILL.**

**ATLANTIC SAPPHIRE'S NEW SALMON FARMS IN COMMISSIONER DENNIS MOSS' DISTRICT IN SOUTH DADE WILL EXPAND OUR MARKET SHARE IN THIS GROWING INDUSTRY.**

**IT'S ALREADY IN PRODUCTION, AND THE FIRST BATCH WILL BE READY IN JULY. THIS MASSIVE FACILITY WILL PUT OUR COUNTY ON TRACK TO BE THE WORLD'S TOP SALMON PRODUCER BY 2030.**

**THANKS TO TECHNOLOGY, THESE INDOOR FARMS WILL PROVIDE A SECURE FOOD SUPPLY PRODUCED IN CLIMATE-CONTROLLED TANKS FREE FROM MICROPLASTICS.**

**TECHNOLOGY CAN BE DISRUPTIVE, BUT WE ARE NOT RUNNING AWAY FROM IT. WE ARE SEIZING THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE BETTER JOBS.**

**WE WERE DISRUPTIVE WHEN THE COUNTY OPENED THE WAY FOR POPULAR RIDE-SHARE COMPANIES LIKE UBER AND LYFT TO COMPETE IN OUR MARKET. I WANT TO THANK COMMISSIONER STEVE BOVO FOR HIS WORK ON THIS FRONT.**

**WE ARE NOW IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FORD MOTOR COMPANY TO TEST DRIVER-LESS VEHICLES ON OUR COUNTY'S STREETS. I'VE BEEN ON SOME OF THOSE TEST RIDES. AND LET ME TELL YOU, THEY ARE WILD!**

**AND JUST LAST MONTH, MIAMI-DADE BECAME THE FIRST PLACE ON THE EAST COAST TO HAVE THE NEW "UBER WORKS" APP THAT WILL SERVE AS A STAFFING AGENCY AND HELP PEOPLE FIND FLEXIBLE JOB SHIFTS.**

**FROM THE VERY FIRST DAY OF MY ADMINISTRATION, I'VE FOCUSED ON HOW TECHNOLOGY CAN MAKE RESIDENTS' LIVES BETTER, AND HOW GOVERNMENT CAN HELP ENCOURAGE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE TO MEET THOSE NEEDS.**

**A STRONG ECONOMY GIVES US THE RESOURCES WE NEED TO BE FLEXIBLE AND RESILIENT SO THAT WE CAN MEET FUTURE CHALLENGES HEAD-ON.**

**THIS YEAR, THE COUNTY IS INVESTING \$466 MILLION OF ITS OPERATING BUDGET TO PROMOTE RESILIENCY EFFORTS.**

**THIS WILL HELP US OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES OF SEA LEVEL RISE AND OTHER SHOCKS, LIKE THE HURRICANES THAT INEVITABLY WILL HIT OUR COUNTY.**

**WE ALSO HAVE CLOSE TO \$3.2 BILLION DEDICATED TO OUR COUNTY'S COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CAPITAL PLAN.**

**THIS IS A WHOLE NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT MIAMI-DADE'S BUDGET.**

**DURING MY FIRST TERM, WE CREATED THE NATION'S FIRST COUNTYWIDE OFFICE OF RESILIENCE, LED BY JIM MURLEY.**

**HIS OFFICE IS WORKING WITH EVERY DEPARTMENT WITHIN OUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE.**

**I WANT TO THANK VICE CHAIRWOMAN REBECA SOSA FOR HER OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP ON RESILIENCY.**

**PLEASE JOIN ME IN THANKING HER WITH A ROUND OF APPLAUSE.**

**WE ARE USING TECHNOLOGY TO FIGHT THE CHALLENGES PRODUCED BY SEA LEVEL RISE. MIAMI-DADE IS THE FIRST COUNTY IN THE NATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION'S 100 RESILIENT CITIES PROGRAM.**

**PARTNERING WITH THE CITIES OF MIAMI AND MIAMI BEACH, WE LAUNCHED THE RESILIENT-305 STRATEGY IN MAY, AND IT'S WELL UNDERWAY. THAT PLAN CLEARLY DESCRIBES 59 ACTION ITEMS THAT WILL HELP US DEAL WITH SHORT-TERM SHOCKS AND LONG-TERM STRESSES RESULTING FROM OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT.**

**THIS YEAR, WE BEGAN A COUNTYWIDE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAM TO BRING FACILITIES AND ASSETS UP TO CODE. THIS PROGRAM WILL IMPROVE ENERGY USE, HEIGHTEN SECURITY, AND ACHIEVE OTHER RESILIENCE GOALS NOW AND FAR INTO OUR FUTURE.**

**AND SPEAKING OF WISE PLANNING, MIAMI-DADE IS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING THE FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND “RESILIENT SCORECARD.” THIS WILL HELP ALL COUNTY DEPARTMENTS TRACK THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR COMMUNITY’S FUTURE SO WE CAN SEE THE PROGRESS WE ARE MAKING.**

**WE ARE ABLE TO TAKE THIS PROACTIVE APPROACH TO RESILIENCE BECAUSE WE HAVE CREATED A STRONG ECONOMY THAT GIVES US THE RESOURCES WE NEED TO TACKLE FUTURE CHALLENGES.**

**THE TOP TWO DRIVERS OF OUR ECONOMY CONTINUE TO BE PORT MIAMI AND MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.**

**NEW RECORDS WERE SET AT M-I-A IN 2019, WITH PASSENGER TRAFFIC AT 46 MILLION TRAVELERS AND CARGO SHIPMENTS AT 2.3 MILLION TONS.**

**WE ALSO ADDED FIVE NEW INTERNATIONAL ROUTES, INCLUDING ROYAL AIR MAROC’S ROUTE TO CASABLANCA IN MOROCCO.**

**FOR PERSPECTIVE, WHEN I TOOK OFFICE IN 2011, M-I-A HAD HIT A RECORD OF 38 MILLION PASSENGERS.**

**SO, OUR AIRPORT HAS INCREASED ITS TRAFFIC BY 8 MILLION PEOPLE, WHICH IS MORE THAN 20 PERCENT GROWTH IN LESS THAN A DECADE.**

**LAST YEAR, THIS GROWTH IN TRAVEL AND CARGO RESULTED IN MORE THAN \$32 BILLION IN DIRECT BUSINESS REVENUE GENERATED AT M-I-A AND THE COUNTY'S GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORTS. THIS AMOUNTED TO A TOTAL ECONOMIC VALUE OF \$118 BILLION FOR THE REGION.**

**IN ADDITION, M-I-A CONTRIBUTED DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY TO MORE THAN 425,000 JOBS, IF YOU INCLUDE AIR FREIGHT.**

**TO SUPPORT FUTURE GROWTH, OUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS APPROVED \$5 BILLION IN AIRPORT MODERNIZATION PROJECTS BACK IN JUNE. THIS WILL PAVE THE WAY FOR AN ESTIMATED 77 MILLION TRAVELERS AND FOUR MILLION TONS OF FREIGHT AT M-I-A BY 2040. LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT'S TO COME.**

**THAT WAS REALLY IMPRESSIVE, AND THESE ARE THE THINGS THAT WE HAVE TO DO TO KEEP M-I-A COMPETITIVE INTO THE FUTURE!**

**AT PORT-MIAMI, MULTIPLE RECORDS WERE ALSO SET IN 2019.**



**ON THE CARGO SIDE, FOR THE FIFTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR, PORT-MIAMI SURPASSED THE 1 MILLION T-E-U MARK. THIS MEANS THAT PORT-MIAMI HANDLED MORE THAN A MILLION CONTAINERS MEASURING AT LEAST 20 FEET LONG AND EIGHT FEET TALL.**

**THIS GROWTH WAS MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS THAT HAVE ALLOWED PORT-MIAMI TO HANDLE MORE THAN 300 POST-PANAMAX VESSELS THAT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CALL HERE BEFORE.**

**IN FACT, IN DECEMBER, WE WELCOMED THE MAGELLAN TO OUR PORT.**

**YEAH, THAT'S ME CLIMBING THE MAGELLAN FROM A PILOT BOAT.**

**WHAT CAN I SAY? THE FIRE-FIGHTER IN ME HAD TO DO IT!**

**THE MAGELLAN IS THE LARGEST CONTAINER SHIP TO EVER VISIT A FLORIDA PORT, SO WE ARE REALLY PROUD OF THAT ACHIEVEMENT.**

**AND LOOK AT THE SIZE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MAGELLAN AND THE SHIPS THAT COULD NAVIGATE OUR PORT BEFORE THE DEEP DREDGE.**

**THAT'S INCREDIBLE.**

**ON THE CRUISE SIDE, PORT-MIAMI CONTINUES TO HOLD ITS DOMINANT POSITION AS THE “CRUISE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD.”**

**IN 2019, PORT-MIAMI HIT AN ALL-TIME RECORD OF MORE THAN 6.8 MILLION PASSENGERS. THIS WAS A 22 PERCENT INCREASE OVER THE YEAR BEFORE.**

**LET'S NOW TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT'S AHEAD FOR PORT MIAMI IN THIS SHORT VIDEO...**

**WASN'T THAT IMPRESSIVE?**

**WE HAVE A FANTASTIC FUTURE AHEAD OF US!**

**THE PORT'S EXPANSION WILL GENERATE AN INCREASED ECONOMIC IMPACT TO SOUTH FLORIDA OF ABOUT \$7.8 BILLION, SUPPORTING AN ADDITIONAL 27,500 JOBS ANNUALLY.**

**THIS IS ABOVE AND BEYOND PORT-MIAMI'S CURRENT OUTPUT OF \$43 BILLION AND CLOSE TO 335,000 JOBS.**

**ABSOLUTELY FANTASTIC!**

**OUR COUNTY CONTINUES TO BE A GLOBAL TOURIST DESTINATION.**

**SINCE 2011, OVERNIGHT VISITORS TO MIAMI-DADE HAVE INCREASED BY 20 PERCENT, AND HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS SOLD HAVE GONE UP 22 PERCENT.**

**IN 2019, GREATER MIAMI WELCOMED 24.3 MILLION VISITORS, FOR AN INCREASE OF ALMOST 5 PERCENT OVER 2018. AND WE SET A RECORD OF 15.9 MILLION HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS.**

**ALL TOLD, TRAVEL AND TOURISM FUELED A RECORD-BREAKING 146,700 JOBS IN 2019.**

**AND WE ARE WELL ON OUR WAY TO FUTURE SUCCESS THANKS TO A NEW FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FROM BILL TALBERT AND HIS TEAM AT THE GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU.**

**BILLY, YOU'RE DOING A GREAT JOB!**

**WE WILL BOOST THESE TOURISM NUMBERS EVEN HIGHER ON FEBRUARY 2ND WHEN MIAMI-DADE HOSTS A RECORD-BREAKING 11TH SUPER BOWL GAME.**

**WHILE M-I-A, PORT-MIAMI AND TOURISM ARE DRIVING FORCES IN OUR LOCAL ECONOMY, WE HAVE A VIBRANT ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT AMONG OUR SMALL BUSINESSES.**

**IN FACT, THE KAUFFMAN FOUNDATION REGULARLY RANKS MIAMI AS THE TOP U.S. CITY FOR START-UP ACTIVITY.**

**THE COUNTY'S INTERNAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS HELPING BOOST SUCCESS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES THROUGH ITS "LOCAL PREFERENCE PROGRAM."**

**IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, THE NUMBER OF COMPANIES REGISTERED WITH THE COUNTY HAS NEARLY DOUBLED, TO MORE THAN 4,600 LOCAL VENDORS.**

**WHILE JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY HAVE BEEN A PRIMARY GOAL OF MY ADMINISTRATION, OUR NUMBER-ONE PUBLIC SERVICE IS ENSURING THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF OUR RESIDENTS.**

**DEPUTY MAYOR MAURICE KEMP HAS HELPED LEAD US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. MO, THANKS FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP.**

**THIS YEAR, OUR COUNTY WILL BE HIRING MORE POLICE OFFICERS THAN EVER BEFORE, REPLACING RETIRING OFFICERS AND HIRING 90 MORE OFFICERS, TO KEEP PACE WITH OUR COUNTY'S POPULATION GROWTH.**

**IT'S DANGEROUS WORK AND OFTEN OUR POLICE FORCE IS SECOND-GUESSED WHEN THEY'RE INVOLVED IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS.**

**THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS COUNT ON INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS OF OUR POLICE FORCE TO MAKE SURE WE LEARN FROM ANY MISTAKES.**

**STARTING WITH POLICE BODY-WORN CAMERAS FOR OUR OFFICERS, TECHNOLOGY HAS HELPED TREMENDOUSLY TO IMPROVE SECURITY FOR ALL.**

**I'M A BIG SUPPORTER OF THIS TECHNOLOGY BECAUSE IT CAN HELP REDUCE CONFRONTATIONS AND KEEP EVERYONE SAFE.**

**I WANT TO THANK FORMER MIAMI-DADE POLICE DIRECTOR JUAN "J-P" PEREZ FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE AND WELCOME FREDDY RAMIREZ TO HIS NEW ROLE LEADING THE DEPARTMENT.**

**OUR FORCE HAS TO BE NIMBLE TO RESPOND TO MASS CASUALTY ATTACKS AND ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATIONS.**

**AFTER THE SCHOOL SHOOTINGS IN BROWARD COUNTY, WE CREATED PRIORITY RESPONSE TEAMS TO QUICKLY RESPOND TO THESE TYPES OF INCIDENTS.**

**M-D-P-D'S THREAT MANAGEMENT SECTION, LAUNCHED IN JUNE OF 2018, HAS HELPED TEMPORARILY REMOVE FIREARMS FROM AT-RISK INDIVIDUALS.**

**MEANWHILE NEW SHOT-SPOTTER TECHNOLOGY HAS REDUCED CRIME AND IMPROVED PUBLIC SAFETY. MOVING FORWARD, WE ARE EXPANDING THIS PROGRAM, ALONG WITH OUR LICENSE PLATE READERS.**

**BOTH SYSTEMS TRANSMIT LIFE-SAVING INFORMATION TO OUR REAL-TIME CRIME CENTER.**

**AT FIRE RESCUE, THE COUNTY HIRED 130 NEW FIREFIGHTERS IN 2019, AND FOUR NEW UNITS WERE ADDED, AS WELL AS A NEW STATION THAT OPENED IN PALMETTO BAY.**

**AND OUR CORRECTIONS AND REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT IS ALSO IN FULL AUTOMATION-MODE. STARTING THIS YEAR, WE WILL HAVE VIDEO VISITATION AS AN OPTION FOR PEOPLE AWAITING TRIAL OR SERVING SHORT SENTENCES.**

**THANKS TO DIRECTOR MORRIS COPELAND AND HIS TEAM AT THE JUVENILE SERVICES DEPARTMENT, WE ALSO CONTINUE TO REDUCE YOUTH VIOLENCE WITH A NUMBER OF OUTSTANDING PROGRAMS AND PARTNERS IN OUR COMMUNITY.**

**THESE PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

**MY BROTHER'S KEEPER**

**OPERATION RESTORATION**

**PROJECT PEACE**

**THE MAYOR'S YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVE  
AND TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN.**

**ALL THESE EFFORTS ARE MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE.**

**WE HAVE SEEN AN IMPRESSIVE 60 PERCENT DECREASE IN  
JUVENILE ARRESTS SINCE 2011.**

**WITH OUR ECONOMY IN ORDER AND THE SAFETY OF OUR  
RESIDENTS CONTINUING TO IMPROVE, THE NEXT MAJOR  
CHALLENGE HAS BEEN TRAFFIC.**

**YOU MAY HAVE HEARD ME SAY THIS BEFORE: THE ONE THING  
WORSE THAN MORE TRAFFIC IS NO TRAFFIC. THAT WOULD BE  
A CLEAR SIGN OF BAD TIMES FOR OUR ECONOMY.**

**WE ARE MOVING FORWARD WITH MULTIPLE PROJECTS THAT ARE IMPROVING DRIVE TIMES AND OFFERING MORE TRANSIT AND RIDE-SHARE OPTIONS.**

**ONE OF OUR MOST CREATIVE HIGH-TECH SOLUTIONS IS THE “VELOCIA” MOBILITY APP WE LAUNCHED LAST MONTH. IT OFFERS REWARDS FOR SMART TRANSIT DECISIONS THAT HELP PEOPLE BREAK THE HABIT OF TRAVELING ALONE IN THEIR CARS.**

**VELOCIA WAS THE WINNING IDEA OF OUR COUNTY'S “FASTRACK” COMPETITION.**

**WE ALSO LAUNCHED “CONTACTLESS OPEN PAYMENT” FOR OUR TRANSIT SYSTEM BACK IN AUGUST. NOW, YOU CAN QUICKLY ENTER THE FAREGATE ON METRORAIL AND METROBUSES WITH A SIMPLE TAP OF YOUR CREDIT CARD OR DIGITAL WALLET.**

**IN ADDITION, OUR CARPOOLING PARTNERSHIP WITH WAZE HAS HELPED REDUCE GRIDLOCK. WE ARE ALSO WORKING HARD TO IMPROVE MIAMI-DADE'S ROADWAYS AND TRANSIT OPTIONS.**

**OUR COUNTY'S “STRATEGIC MIAMI AREA RAPID TRANSIT” PLAN IS ADVANCING SIX CORRIDORS OF THE PEOPLE'S TRANSPORTATION PLAN. IN 2019, WE ACHIEVED MANY KEY MILESTONES FOR THE SMART PLAN.**



**IN OCTOBER, COUNTY COMMISSIONERS APPROVED \$76 MILLION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A RAIL STATION AND PARK-AND-RIDE LOT ON THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR IN A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WITH VIRGIN TRAINS U.S.A.**

**THIS WILL LINK COMMUTERS TRAVELING BETWEEN AVENTURA AND DOWNTOWN MIAMI. VIRGIN TRAINS IS ALSO ADDING A STOP AT PORT-MIAMI.**

**AND PLANS ARE ALSO UNDERWAY FOR A TRI-RAIL STATION IN MIDTOWN.**

**FOR COMMUTERS IN THE SOUTH CORRIDOR, WE ARE MOVING QUICKLY ON A BUS RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM WITH ICONIC STATIONS THAT WILL GET PASSENGERS TO THEIR DESTINATION AS FAST AS IF THEY WERE RIDING METRORAIL.**

**WE WILL BE ABLE TO COMPLETE THIS PROJECT IN THE SUMMER OF 2022.**

**UNDER CURRENT REGULATIONS, THIS WILL BE FINISHED YEARS SOONER THAN WE COULD HAVE COMPLETED A RAIL SYSTEM, FOR ABOUT A BILLION DOLLARS LESS.**

**THE GOOD NEWS IS THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION HAS PUBLISHED PROPOSED RULES TO EXPEDITE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS ON PROJECTS.**

**I WANT TO THANK PRESIDENT TRUMP FOR HIS LEADERSHIP TO BRING COMMON-SENSE REFORMS TO CUT RED TAPE WITHOUT HURTING OUR ENVIRONMENT.**

**FOR THE NORTH CORRIDOR, WE ARE WORKING WITH THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION TO DESIGN AND BUILD MUCH-NEEDED AND LONG-PROMISED PUBLIC TRANSIT IN COMMISSIONER BARBARA JORDAN'S DISTRICT.**

**PLANS FOR THE BEACH CORRIDOR WILL CONNECT MIAMI BEACH TO DOWNTOWN MIAMI AND EVENTUALLY TO THE DESIGN DISTRICT AND MIDTOWN.**

**AND THE R-F-P FOR THE FIRST LEG OF THAT PROJECT IS NOW UNDERWAY.**

**ON THE EAST-WEST CORRIDOR ALONG STATE ROAD 836, AN EXPRESS BUS ROUTE ON THE DOLPHIN EXPRESSWAY WILL BE IN OPERATION THIS SPRING.**

**MEANWHILE, THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS IS NOW ANALYZING THREE RAPID TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES.**

**WE ARE ALSO UPDATING OUR BUS FLEET, BRINGING HUNDREDS OF C-N-G AND ELECTRIC BUSES THAT WILL DRAMATICALLY REDUCE OUR COUNTY'S CARBON FOOTPRINT. AND WE WILL COMPLETE OUR RAIL MODERNIZATION PLAN WITH ALL NEW TRAIN CARS BY THIS SPRING.**

**THERE ARE NO QUICK FIXES, BUT WE ARE MOVING STEADILY FORWARD WITH THE HELP OF TECHNOLOGY.**

**WE CONTINUE TO UPGRADE LIGHTS AT 3,000 INTERSECTIONS USING ADAPTIVE TRAFFIC SIGNAL TECHNOLOGY. THIS ALLOWS FOR CONTINUOUS ADJUSTMENTS OF SIGNAL TIMING TO MEET TRAFFIC DEMANDS AND CHANGING ROAD CONDITIONS.**

**WE ARE ALREADY SEEING IMPROVEMENTS IN DRIVE TIMES DURING RUSH HOUR ON U.S.-1 AND OTHER ROADS.**

**WE ARE ALSO WORKING WITH DEVELOPERS TO BUILD HOUSING AT STRATEGIC LOCATIONS THAT MINIMIZE THE TIME PEOPLE SPEND COMMUTING.**

**NEW “TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENTS” INCLUDE THE “LINK AT DOUGLAS” AND “MOTION AT DADELAND.” BOTH OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS ARE NEXT TO METRORAIL STATIONS IN COMMISSIONER XAVIER SUAREZ'S DISTRICT.**

**EVEN AS WE COME UP WITH CREATIVE WAYS TO GET MORE PEOPLE OUT OF THEIR CARS INTO TRANSIT AND RIDE-SHARE OPTIONS, WE KNOW THAT MOST PEOPLE STILL HAVE TO COUNT ON THEIR CARS TO GET AROUND.**

**THAT'S WHY I WILL KEEP FIGHTING FOR THE RESIDENTS OF WEST KENDALL AND SOUTH DADE WHO ARE DESPERATE FOR RELIEF FROM TRAFFIC CONGESTION THAT IS DESTROYING THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE.**

**THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF MISINFORMATION ABOUT THE KENDALL PARKWAY PROJECT, INCLUDING ACCUSATIONS THAT IT WILL HURT THE EVERGLADES.**

**HERE, I TAKE MY INSPIRATION FROM ONE OF MY FAVORITE PRESIDENTS, TEDDY ROOSEVELT, WHO SAID – QUOTE – “THE NATION BEHAVES WELL IF IT TREATS THE NATURAL RESOURCES AS ASSETS, WHICH IT MUST TURN OVER TO THE NEXT GENERATION INCREASED AND NOT IMPAIRED IN VALUE. CONSERVATION MEANS DEVELOPMENT AS MUCH AS IT DOES PROTECTION.”**

**THANK YOU, PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, FOR THOSE WISE WORDS THAT HAVE STOOD THE TEST OF TIME.**

**WE WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH FOR THE KENDALL PARKWAY BECAUSE IT WILL DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF WEST DADE.**

**WE CAN DEVELOP THE PARKWAY IN A WAY THAT PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT, LIMITS NEW GROWTH AND GIVES MORE THAN 600,000 COUNTY RESIDENTS A NEW ROADWAY. THAT WILL DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF WEST KENDALL. THEY DESERVE THIS.**

**I WANT TO THANK COMMISSIONER JOE MARTINEZ FOR HIS SUPPORT ON THIS PROJECT.**

**ANOTHER PROMISING PROJECT ON THE DRAWING BOARD FOR SOUTH DADE IS THE “REDLAND MARKET VILLAGE” IN COMMISSIONER DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA'S DISTRICT. IT WILL CREATE A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN THAT WILL BRING 2,600 JOBS AND \$351 MILLION TO THE COMMUNITY DURING CONSTRUCTION. ONCE COMPLETE, IT WILL GENERATE AN ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF \$40 MILLION.**

**WE MAKE GREAT USE OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN ALL AREAS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE NEW COURTHOUSE.**

**THIS WILL ACTUALLY BE ONE OF ONLY THREE COURTHOUSES IN THE NATION TO BE BUILT THROUGH A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP. I WANT TO RECOGNIZE COMMISSIONER SALLY HEYMAN FOR HER PASSIONATE SUPPORT OF THIS PROJECT.**

**ALL OF OUR ECONOMIC SUCCESS HAS ALSO CREATED CHALLENGES THAT WE ARE TURNING INTO NEW OPPORTUNITIES. AFFORDABLE HOUSING TOPS THAT LIST.**

**WE ARE EXPANDING ALL OPTIONS IN THE AREAS OF AFFORDABLE AND PUBLIC HOUSING, IN ADDITION TO THE FEDERAL SECTION 8 HOUSING PROGRAM.**

**OUR MOST VULNERABLE RESIDENTS – THE ELDERLY AND CHILDREN – ARE AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE OUR PRIORITY.**

**RIGHT NOW, ONE-THIRD OF OUR PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS AND 36 PERCENT OF OUR SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHERS ARE FOR SENIORS.**

**OVER THE PAST YEAR, WE HAVE INCREASED THE NUMBER OF SENIORS SERVED THROUGH ALL OF OUR HOUSING PROGRAMS TO MORE THAN 20,000, WHICH IS AN ALMOST 50 PERCENT INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR.**

**IN 2019, WE OPENED**

**MARTIN FINE VILLAS**

**THREE ROUND TOWER A**

**MARCIA GARDENS**

**AND THE CARIBBEAN VILLAGE.**

**AND JUST A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO, AT RIVER PARC, IN COMMISSIONER EILEEN HIGGINS' DISTRICT, WE UNVEILED EXTENSIVE PLANS FOR MANY MORE AFFORDABLE AND PUBLIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS FOR SENIORS.**

**WE ALSO HAVE MADE DRAMATIC PROGRESS FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES.**

**WE CELEBRATED ONE OF MY PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENTS BACK IN JULY, WHEN WE HELD THE GRAND RE-OPENING OF PHASE ONE AT LIBERTY SQUARE.**

**THAT DEVELOPMENT HAD FALLEN INTO HORRIBLE DIS-REPAIR AS FEDERAL SUBSIDIES DRIED UP OVER THE DECADES SINCE IT FIRST OPENED IN 1937. F-D-R WAS THE PRESIDENT.**

**SO, OUR COUNTY ENTERED A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WITH RELATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO BRING ABOUT MASSIVE TRANSFORMATION TO THAT AREA.**

**THE NEW RE-DEVELOPMENT PLAN NOW COMBINES PUBLIC HOUSING WITH AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING UNITS, AS WELL AS JOB SITES LIKE DOCTOR'S OFFICES AND STORES.**

**IT ALSO INCLUDES MARKET-RATE RENTAL APARTMENTS, ALONG WITH AFFORDABLE CONDOMINIUMS FOR WORKING FAMILIES IN SEARCH OF THE AMERICAN DREAM OF HOMEOWNERSHIP.**

**MOST IMPRESSIVE OF ALL, NOT A SINGLE PUBLIC-HOUSING RESIDENT HAS BEEN DISPLACED. AS PROMISED, EVERYONE HAD A NEARBY PLACE TO LIVE DURING THE CONSTRUCTION UNTIL THEIR NEW UNITS WERE READY.**

**MY THANKS TO CHAIRWOMAN AUDREY EDMONSON FOR WORKING WITH ME TO IRON OUT THE ISSUES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PROJECT.**

**LET'S GIVE HER A ROUND OF APPLAUSE.**



**THE MASTERMIND BEHIND THE IMPROVEMENTS AT LIBERTY SQUARE ALONG WITH ALL THE NEW AND RE-DEVELOPMENT IN OUR COUNTY HAS BEEN MICHAEL LIU, OUR COUNTY'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.**

**THANKS TO HIS TEAM'S HARD WORK, WE HAVE FOUND SMART WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR PUBLIC HOUSING WHILE KEEPING PEOPLE CONNECTED TO THEIR COMMUNITIES.**

**WE ALSO HAVE AGGRESSIVELY PURSUED FEDERAL FUNDING THROUGH THE "RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION" PROGRAM.**

**"RAD" IS A TRUE GAME CHANGER. WE HAVE A GOAL OF 10,000 MORE AFFORDABLE UNITS BY NOVEMBER, AND WE ARE GOING TO MAKE THAT DEADLINE.**

**I WANT TO GIVE SPECIAL THANKS TO COMMISSIONER DENNIS MOSS. HE HAS BEEN A CHAMPION FOR CREATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS.**

**MIAMI-DADE'S HOMELESS TRUST ALSO HAS MADE HUGE STRIDES FORWARD TO PROVIDE SHELTER FOR THOSE MOST IN NEED.**

**SINCE 1994, THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS RESIDENTS IN OUR COUNTY HAS DROPPED FROM MORE THAN 8,000 TO 1,100 PEOPLE TODAY.**

**WHILE OTHER COMMUNITIES STRUGGLE NATIONWIDE WITH GROWING HOMELESSNESS, MIAMI-DADE HAS EARNED NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR PROVIDING THE SERVICES NEEDED TO HELP PEOPLE OVERCOME OBSTACLES AND GET A SAFE AND AFFORDABLE PLACE TO LIVE.**

**MIAMI-DADE IS ONE OF ONLY 10 COMMUNITIES CHOSEN TO PARTICIPATE IN A PROGRAM CALLED “A WAY HOME.”**

**THIS IS A NATIONWIDE CHALLENGE TO END HOMELESSNESS FOR L-G-B-T-Q YOUTH, ALONG WITH YOUNG PEOPLE OF COLOR.**

**FOR THOSE RESIDENTS IN OUR COUNTY WHO ARE HOMEOWNERS, LIFE HAS ALSO IMPROVED DRAMATICALLY IN THE PAST EIGHT YEARS.**

**IN 2012, SHORTLY AFTER I TOOK OFFICE, WE CREATED THE DEPARTMENT OF REGULATORY AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES TO CONSOLIDATE THE COUNTY'S FRAGMENTED PERMITTING PROCESS.**

**R-E-R HAS MADE DOZENS OF CODE CHANGES AND STREAMLINED PERMITTING, SAVING BUSINESSES AND HOMEOWNERS BOTH TIME AND MONEY.**

**LAST YEAR, WE LAUNCHED A PERMITTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM THAT'S A ONE-STOP SHOP FOR HOMEOWNERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES. IT HELPS THEM CUT THROUGH ALL THE RED TAPE.**

**SO FAR, MORE THAN 1,000 HOMEOWNERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES HAVE USED THIS FREE SERVICE.**

**MY APPRECIATION GOES TO DEPUTY MAYOR JACK OSTERHOLT ON ALL THINGS THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WITH CUTTING THE RED TAPE AND BUREAUCRACY.**

**JACK, YOU AND YOUR TEAM MAKE IT HAPPEN!  
THANK YOU!**

**OF COURSE, ALL THAT WE ARE DOING AND ALL THE GROWTH WE ARE EXPERIENCING CANNOT CONTINUE WITHOUT CLEAN WATER FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.**

**THE COUNTY'S WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT IS MEETING INCREASING NEEDS.**

**IN THE PAST SIX YEARS, W-A-S-D HAS INVESTED NEARLY \$2 BILLION AND COMPLETED CLOSE TO 1,500 PROJECTS AS PART OF THE LARGEST CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S HISTORY.**

**AND WE'RE DOING THIS IN SMART WAYS THAT WILL CUT CONSTRUCTION COSTS NEARLY IN HALF OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS, FROM AN INITIAL PROJECTION OF \$13.5 BILLION TO NOW JUST \$7.5 BILLION.**

**LAST YEAR, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BECAME ONE OF THE FIRST COMMUNITIES IN THE NATION TO TAKE PART IN A LARGE-SCALE E.P.A. PROGRAM CALLED THE "WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCE AND INNOVATION ACT."**

**THIS WILL PROVIDE \$100 MILLION IN CRITICAL FUNDING FOR OUR COUNTY'S WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT TO CONSTRUCT 14 NEW INJECTION WELLS.**

**THANK YOU TO OUR FEDERAL PARTNERS FOR SECURING THIS LOAN.**

**W-A-S-D'S RATE-PAYERS WILL SAVE \$27 MILLION IN INTEREST COSTS OVER THE LIFE OF THIS LOAN.**

**AND WE CONTINUE TO INNOVATE.**

**THANKS TO W-A-S-D'S WISE PLANNING, MIAMI-DADE IS ONE OF ONLY FIVE GLOBAL COMMUNITIES TO PILOT A “CITY WATER RESILIENCE APPROACH” THAT WILL EVALUATE THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF OUR WATER SYSTEM.**

**WE ALSO CONTINUE TO STUDY THE WATER QUALITY OF OUR BEAUTIFUL BISCAYNE BAY.**

**WE WANT TO MAKE SURE WE BALANCE OUR COUNTY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH PROTECTION OF THIS IMPORTANT ECOSYSTEM SO THAT IT IS IN BETTER CONDITION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ENJOY.**

**PROTECTING OUR WATER AND OUR LAND IS PARAMOUNT, SO WE ARE MAKING SURE THAT OUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE DISPOSAL NEEDS ARE ALSO MET.**

**I'M PLEASED TO SAY THAT THE COUNTY'S DEPARTMENT OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT RECENTLY COMPLETED CONSTRUCTION OF THE FIFTH AND THE FINAL CELL AT THE SOUTH DADE LANDFILL.**

**IT'S AN IMPORTANT PROJECT THAT WILL SERVE OUR COMMUNITY FOR MANY YEARS.**

**ONE OF SOLID WASTE'S TOP ACHIEVEMENTS HAS BEEN MOSQUITO CONTROL'S ERADICATION OF THE ZIKA VIRUS IN**

**2016. OUR COUNTY IS THE ONLY COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD TO HAVE CONQUERED THIS DEVASTATING VIRUS.**

**EVERYTHING THAT WE DO IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS FOCUSED ON MAKING MIAMI-DADE A BETTER PLACE FOR ALL RESIDENTS BY PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST.**

**WITH THAT GOAL IN MIND, THE COUNTY'S COMMUNITY ACTION AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAS MADE GREAT STRIDES TO HELP OUR MOST VULNERABLE RESIDENTS.**

**SINCE 2011, MORE THAN 900 CHILDREN HAVE BEEN ADDED TO HEAD START PROGRAMS, WITH A NEW MODEL THAT PUTS NON-PROFITS IN CHARGE OF EDUCATION GOALS.**

**FOR EVERY \$1 OF LOCAL TAX MONEY SPENT, CAHSD HAS LEVERAGED MORE THAN \$3 FROM OUTSIDE FUNDERS. THIS HAS HELPED US BUILD CRITICAL SERVICES.**

**THROUGH A \$10 MILLION GRANT, MORE THAN 500 FAMILIES HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM.**

**THIS FUNDING CREATED MORE THAN 160 NEW JOBS IN 2019. IT ALSO INTRODUCED THE MONTESSORI METHOD INTO NEIGHBORHOODS THAT NORMALLY WOULD NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THIS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL TEACHING MODEL.**

**CAHSD ALSO HAS HELPED FEED OUR COUNTY'S MOST VULNERABLE RESIDENTS: OUR CHILDREN AND OUR SENIORS.**

**MORE THAN 1.2 MILLION MEALS HAVE BEEN SERVED TO ADULTS, AND MORE THAN 10,000 CHILDREN HAVE RECEIVED TWO MEALS DAILY.**

**THIS PAST SUMMER, WE OFFERED MEALS TO KIDS AT 180 SITES. THAT'S AN INCREASE OF 35 PERCENT OVER LAST YEAR.**

**USING FEDERAL GRANTS, CAHSD ALSO PROVIDED \$9.5 MILLION TO 30,000 LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS FOR HOME COOLING AND HEATING COSTS.**

**IT ALSO HELPED MORE THAN 12,000 VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND PREVENTED MORE THAN 600 FAMILIES FROM BEING EVICTED.**

**IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, WE NOT ONLY CARE FOR OUR RESIDENTS, WE ALSO PROTECT THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR PETS AND STRAY ANIMALS.**

**BEFORE I BECAME MAYOR, MORE THAN 50 PERCENT OF THE ANIMALS ENTERING OUR SHELTER WERE EUTHANIZED.**

**DURING MY FIRST TERM IN OFFICE, MIAMI-DADE'S DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES IMPLEMENTED A 5-YEAR "NO KILL" PLAN.**

**WITHIN 3 YEARS, WE WERE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THE FIRST-EVER 90 PERCENT "SAVE RATE" IN THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTY. AND BACK IN 2016, WE OPENED A BEAUTIFUL NEW SHELTER IN DORAL TO REPLACE THE OLD AND DILAPIDATED SHELTER.**

**IN TOTAL, WE HAVE SAVED 130,000 CATS AND DOGS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS.**

**TO BRING VETERINARY SERVICES TO LIBERTY CITY, WE OPENED A NEW "COMMUNITY VETERINARY CENTER" IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE A-S-P-C-A IN THE FALL.**

**TO MANAGE OUR ANIMAL POPULATION, WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH THE MIAMI VETERINARY FOUNDATION AND THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF GREATER MIAMI TO SPAY AND NEUTER MORE THAN 46,000 ANIMALS IN 2019.**

**THAT'S A HUGE IMPROVEMENT OVER 2011, WHEN ONLY ABOUT 10,000 ANIMALS WERE SPAYED AND NEUTERED IN THE COUNTY.**

**KUDOS TO DIRECTOR ALEX MUÑOZ AND HIS STAFF FOR THESE ACHIEVEMENTS.**



**I ALSO WANT TO THANK COMMISSIONER JOSÉ PEPE DÍAZ FOR HIS UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF ANIMAL SERVICES.**

**TO HELP COUNTY RESIDENTS GET ALL THE INFORMATION THEY WANT AND NEED ABOUT OUR SERVICES, THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS LAUNCHED THE NEW “MIAMI – DADE – DOT – GOV” PORTAL.**

**MORE THAN 5.7 MILLION USERS HAVE ACCESSED THIS AWARD-WINNING WEBSITE IN ITS FIRST YEAR.**

**EVERY YEAR, MORE OF OUR RESIDENTS ARE USING TECHNOLOGY TO GET THEIR TRASH PICKED UP OR PAY A COUNTY BILL.**

**DIGITAL REQUESTS TO THE COUNTY'S 311-DIRECT MOBILE APP AND WEB SITE GREW MORE THAN 15 PERCENT IN THE PAST YEAR ALONE.**

**THE COUNTY HAS COME A LONG WAY SINCE IT ENTERED THE SOCIAL MEDIA WORLD IN 2004 WITH THE LAUNCH OF THE “ELECTION READY MY-SPACE” PAGE.**

**TODAY, MIAMI-DADE'S SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES REACH MORE THAN 44 MILLION USERS EACH YEAR.**

**THANKS TO SENIOR ADVISOR MYRIAM MARQUEZ AND THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT FOR CONTINUING TO FIND WAYS THAT MAKE GOVERNMENT SERVICES MORE ACCESSIBLE TO OUR RESIDENTS.**

**WITH OUR ECONOMY GROWING, JOB PROSPECTS STEADILY IMPROVING, AND PUBLIC SERVICES EXPANDING TO MEET RESIDENTS' GROWING NEEDS, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FOCUS ON OTHER SERVICES THAT MAKE MIAMI-DADE A GREAT PLACE TO “LIVE, LEARN, WORK AND TO PLAY.”**

**IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, OUR LIBRARIES HAVE EXTENDED THEIR HOURS AND DAYS AND NOW OFFER MORE SERVICE THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME IN OUR COUNTY'S HISTORY.**

**WHEN I FIRST CAME TO OFFICE AND WE WERE FACING THE “GREAT RECESSION,” WE WERE FORCED TO CUT HOURS AND SERVICES AT MANY OF OUR LIBRARIES.**

**WITH WISE PLANNING AND INVESTMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY, WE HAVE LED THE WAY NATIONALLY BY BECOMING A LIBRARY SYSTEM THAT NO LONGER FINES OUR PATRONS FOR LATE BOOK RETURNS.**

**WE ALSO HAVE IMPROVED OUR I-T INFRASTRUCTURE TO HELP BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND MAKE KNOWLEDGE ACCESSIBLE TO RESIDENTS AT ALL SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVELS.**

**WE ARE LEVELING THE “LEARNING FIELD” FOR ALL YOUTH IN OUR COUNTY BY OFFERING FREE HOMEWORK HELP AND TUTORING AT OUR LIBRARIES. MORE THAN 1,200 STUDENTS ARE BEING HELPED EACH SCHOOL YEAR.**

**AND WE ARE RENOVATING OUR LIBRARIES WITH A FOCUS ON FUTURE TECHNOLOGIES.**

**CHECK OUT OUR LIBRARIES AT THE LOCATIONS IN ALLAPATTAH, CORAL REEF, EDISON, KENDALL AND WEST KENDALL.**

**YOU'LL BE IMPRESSED.**

**WE ARE ALSO CURRENTLY BUILDING A NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART LIBRARY IN HIALEAH GARDENS.**

**WHILE THE LIBRARY SYSTEM HELPS OUR RESIDENTS DEVELOP THEIR MINDS, OUR DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES HELPS KEEP US PHYSICALLY FIT AS WE ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS.**

**ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES OUR PARK SYSTEM FACED IN 2019 WAS THE SPREAD OF SEAWEED ALONG OUR SHORELINE.**

**WE BLADED AND REMOVED MORE THAN 27,000 CUBIC YARDS OF SEAWEED TO KEEP OUR BEACHES PRISTINE FOR OUR 2.8 MILLION RESIDENTS AND THE 23 MILLION TOURISTS WHO VISIT EACH YEAR AND WHO CONTRIBUTE MORE THAN \$18 BILLION TO OUR LOCAL ECONOMY.**

**I WANT TO THANK COMMISSIONER EILEEN HIGGINS FOR HER LEADERSHIP ON THAT PROJECT.**

**WE ALSO HAVE TURNED OUR ATTENTION INLAND TO IMPROVE OUR TREE CANOPY. IN THE PAST TWO YEARS ALONE, WE HAVE ADDED MORE THAN 1,400 TREES AND 7,600 PLANTS ALONG WALKWAYS, ROADWAYS, BIKE PATHS AND BUS SHELTERS THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTY.**

**THANKS GO TO COMMISSIONER DENNIS MOSS FOR HIS WORK ON THIS “NEAT STREETS” PROGRAM.**

**FIVE YEARS AGO, OUR PARK SYSTEM BEGAN TRANSITIONING FROM COOKIE-CUTTER PLAYGROUNDS TO INNOVATIVE, NATURE-BASED SPACES.**

**OUR FIRST SUCCESS WAS “TOM SAWYER'S PLAY ISLAND” AT AMELIA EARHART PARK.**

**SINCE THEN, WE HAVE RENOVATED MORE THAN A DOZEN PARKS, WITH PLANS FOR MANY MORE IN THE WORKS.**

**IN 2019, WE ALSO OPENED TWO MAJOR FACILITIES:**

**THE \$5.4 MILLION SOUTH DADE PARK AQUATIC CENTER.**

**AND THE FATHER GERARD JEAN-JUST COMMUNITY CENTER,  
WHICH IS A BEAUTIFUL \$11 MILLION FACILITY.**

**THANK YOU, COMMISSIONER JEAN MONESTIME, FOR YOUR  
STEADFAST SUPPORT OF THAT PROJECT.**

**IN 2019, PARKS ENTERED A NEW ERA OF INCLUSION FOR ALL  
CHILDREN WITH THE “SUPER-HERO GARDEN AUTISM  
PLAYGROUND” AT TAMiami PARK.**

**IT'S A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND OUTDOOR PARK FOR YOUTH AT ALL  
RANGES OF THE AUTISM SPECTRUM. AND WE PLAN FOR  
MORE PLAYGROUNDS LIKE THIS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY.**

**ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTHY RECREATION HAS INCREASED IN  
RECENT YEARS, THANKS TO THE MAYOR'S YOUTH SPORTS  
CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES.**

**MEANWHILE, THE FIT-2-LEAD YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM HAS LED TO A 31 PERCENT REDUCTION IN  
JUVENILE ARRESTS IN ZIP CODES WHERE IT IS OFFERED.**

**THIS SUCCESS RESULTED IN FIT-2-LEAD RECEIVING A \$1.8 MILLION GRANT FROM THE CHILDREN'S TRUST.**

**WE CONTINUE TO EXPAND OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS IN THE MOST CREATIVE WAYS.**

**THE FIRST HALF MILE OF THE UNDERLINE WILL OPEN THIS YEAR. THIS LINEAR RECREATION SPACE WILL EVENTUALLY SPAN 10 MILES, UNDER THE METRORAIL LINE.**

**WE ARE ALSO GOING TO HELP DEVELOP THE SIX-MILE LUDLAM TRAIL ALONG THE ABANDONED TRAIN TRACKS IN WEST MIAMI-DADE.**

**THIS HAS BEEN A TOP PROJECT FOR VICE CHAIRWOMAN REBECA SOSA.**

**ON THE CULTURAL FRONT, OUR COUNTY OFFERS WIDE-RANGING PROGRAMS AT EXCEPTIONAL VENUES.**

**SINCE 2011, MORE THAN \$138 MILLION HAS BEEN INVESTED IN MATCHING GRANTS THAT HAVE MADE MIAMI-DADE A WORLD-CLASS ARTS CENTER. THIS YEAR, THE COUNTY IS INVESTING ANOTHER \$20 MILLION IN THE ARTS.**

**THESE INVESTMENTS ARE GENERATING AN IMPRESSIVE \$1.4 BILLION IMPACT IN OUR LOCAL ECONOMY. OUR**

**INVESTMENTS HAVE PLACED MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AMONG THE TOP THREE CULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE NATION.**

**AND HERE I MUST THANK MY SENIOR ADVISOR AND DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS, MICHAEL SPRING.**

**HIS LEADERSHIP AND VISION HAVE CONTINUED TO ELEVATE ARTS, PARKS AND LIBRARIES IN MIAMI-DADE.**

**ON OUR BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, SENATOR JAVIER SOUTO HAS BEEN A STRONG ADVOCATE FOR PARKS AND CULTURAL CENTERS.**

**THANK YOU, SENATOR. I APPRECIATE YOUR DECADES OF DEDICATION TO OUR COMMUNITY, TO OUR PARKS AND TO THE ARTS.**

**ARTS HAVE THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER TO EXPAND OUR HORIZONS AND UNITE US ACROSS CULTURAL DIVIDES.**

**THAT'S WHY WE DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO MAKE THE ARTS INCLUSIVE, AFFORDABLE AND REFLECTIVE OF OUR DIVERSE POPULATION.**

**THANKS TO OUR COUNTY'S "ALL KIDS INCLUDED" PROGRAM, MORE THAN 1.7 MILLION CHILDREN AND YOUTH HAVE**

**PARTICIPATED IN FREE CULTURAL EVENTS IN THE PAST DECADE.**

**FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS, “CULTURE SHOCK MIAMI” OFFERS AFFORDABLE \$5 TICKETS THAT HAVE REACHED MORE THAN 118,000 STUDENTS.**

**AND FOR OUR SENIORS, OUR “GOLDEN TICKET ARTS GUIDES” HAVE REACHED 160,000 RESIDENTS AGES 62 AND OLDER, PROVIDING FREE TICKETS TO CULTURAL EVENTS.**

**AND THAT, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, IS WHAT MY ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN ABOUT SINCE DAY ONE...**

**MAKING OUR COMMUNITY A GREAT PLACE FOR EVERYONE TO LIVE WHILE ALSO MAKING GOOD ON MY PROMISE TO LEAVE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IN A MUCH BETTER POSITION THAN WHEN I FIRST TOOK OFFICE.**

**I BELIEVE WE HAVE MET THE CHALLENGES AND EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS. BUT NONE OF THAT MATTERS IF YOU DON'T PARTICIPATE IN OUR DEMOCRACY AND VOTE.**

**SO, LOOKING AHEAD, I WANT TO POINT OUT THAT THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS WILL BE GETTING UNDERWAY IN FLORIDA THIS SPRING, AND OUR COUNTY IS PREPARED.**



**WE HAVE INSTALLED A NEW PAPER-BACKED SYSTEM THAT'S COMPLIANT WITH THE "FEDERAL AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT."**

**THIS WILL ENSURE THE SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF ELECTIONS FOR ALL VOTERS.**

**OUR COUNTY HAS LED THE WAY IN SUCCESSFUL ELECTIONS. JUST LAST YEAR WE HAD RECOUNTS IN THREE STATEWIDE RACES, AND OUR COUNTY WAS PRAISED NATIONWIDE FOR HOW WE EXCELLED BY ALL MEASURES.**

**WE TRULY HAVE COME A LONG WAY.**

**WE ARE ALSO ENCOURAGING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT BY CAMPAIGNING HARD TO HAVE ALL OUR RESIDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE 2020 CENSUS.**

**MAKE EVERYONE COUNT!**

**WE WANT TO MAKE SURE OUR COUNTY GETS ITS FAIR SHARE OF REPRESENTATION AND FEDERAL FUNDING.**

**TO HELP THOSE SEEKING CITIZENSHIP, WE FOUNDED THE OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS IN 2015.**

**THIS PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP EDUCATES ASPIRING AMERICANS BY OFFERING FREE AND LOW-COST SERVICES.**

**WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED SO MUCH IN THE PAST EIGHT YEARS, BUT I'M A REALIST.**

**GOVERNMENT CAN'T SOLVE ALL OUR PROBLEMS.**

**IT'S THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF OUR RESIDENTS THAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RESPOND AND OFFER A HELPING HAND TO THOSE WHO NEED IT HERE – AND FAR AWAY, TOO.**

**THE RESIDENTS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAVE STEPPED UP TO HELP OTHERS TIME AND AGAIN – WHEREVER IT WAS, WHETHER IT WAS:**

**SENDING RESCUE TEAMS AND DONATED SUPPLIES TO HAITI AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE ...**

**OR RESPONDING TO HURRICANES THAT DEVASTATED NORTH FLORIDA IN 2018 OR THE BAHAMAS LAST YEAR...**

**OR GATHERING DONATIONS FOR VENEZUELANAS STILL SUFFERING UNDER THE CUBAN-RUN SOCIALISM IMPOSED BY THE MADURO REGIME.**

**THANKS TO EVERYONE'S GENEROSITY, WE HAVE ACHIEVED MIRACLES IN REACHING OUT TO HELP OUR NEIGHBORS AT HOME AND ABROAD.**

**I WANT TO THANK MY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT JEANNETTE VAZQUEZ AND MY ENTIRE STAFF FOR ALL THAT YOU DO TO HELP OUR COMMUNITY, WHETHER IT IS PITCHING IN DURING HURRICANE RELIEF EFFORTS OR COLLECTING TOYS FOR CHILDREN DURING THE HOLIDAYS.**

**I ALSO WANT TO RECOGNIZE OUR CHIEF OF STAFF ALEX FERRO AND OUR POLICY DIRECTOR NICOLE TALLMAN, OUR OFFICE MANAGER MARITZA PEREIRA, AND MY ALL OF MY AIDS, INCLUDING NORMAN MACKY, AND EVERYONE ELSE ON THE 29<sup>th</sup> FLOOR.**

**I ALSO WANT TO THANK COUNTY ATTORNEY ABIGAIL PRICE-WILLIAMS AND HER TEAM OF TOP-NOTCH ATTORNEYS.**

**I MAY HAVE BEEN BORN IN CUBA, BUT MY LIFE AND MY HEART ARE IN THIS COMMUNITY.**

**OUR NATION WELCOMED MY FAMILY AND ME WHEN I WAS BARELY SIX YEARS OLD, AND I WILL BE ETERNALLY GRATEFUL TO BE LIVING IN A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY.**

**THAT'S ME, WITH MY MOM AND SISTER MITZY JUST A YEAR BEFORE WE LEFT COMMUNIST CUBA.**

**AND THAT'S ME WITH MY FATHER AND MOTHER AND SISTER  
IN THE FIRST HOME THAT MY FATHER BOUGHT IN VILLAGE  
GREEN.**

**DURING THOSE YEARS, I PLAYED BASEBALL FOR THE  
KHOURY LEAGUE AND ATTENDED SAINT TIMOTHY.**

**WHEN I WENT TO CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL,  
I WAS A POINT GUARD FOR THEIR BASKETBALL TEAM.**

**THERE I AM, NUMBER 14.**

**AND THAT IS WHEN I MET THE BEST-LOOKING CHEERLEADER  
ON THE SQUAD – LOURDES PORTELA. SHE STILL IS THE MOST  
BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN ANY ROOM.**

**AND HERE I AM AS A YOUNG CAPTAIN IN THE MIAMI FIRE  
DEPARTMENT, WITH LOURDES AND THE KIDS.**

**I LOVE THIS COMMUNITY.**

**PUBLIC SERVICE, MAKING LIFE BETTER FOR PEOPLE,  
IS WHAT I AM ALL ABOUT.**

**I BEGAN MY CAREER AS A FIRE FIGHTER AND A PARAMEDIC  
TO HELP PEOPLE.**

**I DIDN'T START OUT IN A SUIT. I STARTED OUT IN A JUMPSUIT HELPING PEOPLE.**

**THAT HAS BEEN MY PASSION SINCE I ENTERED PUBLIC SERVICE.**

**IT HAS LED ME TO BECOME  
A FIRE CHIEF,  
A CITY MANAGER,  
A COUNTY COMMISSIONER,  
THEN MAYOR OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.**

**WHEN I WAS CITY MANAGER, THAT FOCUS ON PUTTING  
“SERVICE BEFORE SELF” LED TO OUR SUCCESS IN CUTTING  
THE TAX RATE TO ITS LOWEST LEVEL IN OVER  
50 YEARS AND ESTABLISHING A RESERVE FUND OF MORE  
THAN \$140 MILLION, WHICH RAISED THE CITY OF MIAMI'S  
BOND RATING FROM "JUNK" STATUS TO INVESTMENT GRADE  
AND LEFT THE CITY OF MIAMI IN THE BEST FINANCIAL  
CONDITION EVER.**

**AND THAT DESIRE TO SERVE KEPT ME GOING AS MAYOR  
WHEN TIMES WERE TOUGH IN MIAMI-DADE.**

**NOW, TOGETHER, WE HAVE BROUGHT OUR COUNTY TO THE  
GREAT HEIGHTS IT ENJOYS TODAY.**

**BUT OUR WORK IS NOT DONE.**

**AS YOU ALL KNOW, WHEN YOU DEVOTE YOUR LIFE TO PUBLIC SERVICE, YOUR JOB IS NEVER DONE.**

**WE HAVE MUCH MORE AHEAD TO ACCOMPLISH.**

**SO, WE WILL WORK HARD TOGETHER – TODAY, TOMORROW AND THE NEXT DAY – AND ALL THE WAY TO NOVEMBER, AND THEN FAR BEYOND THAT.**

**WHEN YOU WALK OUT OF HERE TODAY, GIVE OUR GORGEOUS SKYLINE A LOOK, ...AND THEN THINK BACK TO WHERE WE WERE A DECADE AGO.**

**BELIEVE ME, THAT WILL BRING A SMILE TO YOUR FACE.**

**IT ALWAYS DOES FOR ME.**

**WHAT A FANTASTIC TURN-AROUND!**

**WE ARE NOW A WORLD-CLASS CITY WHERE PEOPLE WORK IN EXCITING JOBS AND CHILDREN LEARN THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO SUCCEED NOW AND EXCEL IN THE FUTURE.**

**WE HAVE A LOT TO BE PROUD OF ...  
AND EVEN MORE TO BE GRATEFUL FOR.**

**THANK YOU AGAIN FOR BEING HERE TODAY, AND FOR JOINING ME ON THIS INCREDIBLE JOURNEY.**

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU, AND MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.**

**QUE DIOS LOS BENDIGA.**

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

