



MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # 344-2013

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: September 18, 2013

SUBJECT: **State Legislative Issues**

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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

The purpose of this LTC is to provide the Mayor and City Commission with an update on the 2014 Session of the Florida Legislature.

Interim Committee meetings will begin in late September for the House and Senate, with one week of meetings each month through December, followed by a higher frequency of meetings in January and February leading up to the start of Session on March 4, 2014. Therefore in order to prepare as early as possible, please find below a proposed preliminary State Legislative Agenda. This agenda is based on the 2013 Legislative Agenda adopted by the Mayor and City Commission, and includes items that were not addressed in 2013 or that the Administration and the City's Lobbyists anticipate will be considered again in 2014.

Additional items may be added to the agenda between now and the start of the legislative session, and the Administration anticipates approval of the final State Legislative Agenda at the December City Commission meeting, following briefings with the Mayor and each Commissioner in late November and early December. Additionally, the Administration will meet with the Quality in Education Committee to discuss the State Legislative Agenda and the upcoming session prior finalizing the Agenda.

CRITICAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Beach Renourishment

The City urges the Legislature to fully fund the State's share of beach renourishment funding at \$30 million. Additionally, the City strongly urges the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to work with the US Army Corps of Engineers to finally address the critical issue of identifying long-term sand sources for the renourishment of Florida's beaches.

Sea Level Rise

The City of Miami Beach urges the state to prioritize funding and programs to address sea level rise.

Parking Revenue

The City opposes efforts to transfer parking meter revenue on state roads from cities to the state.

Destination Resorts / Gaming Bills

The City opposes efforts that would lead to the expansion of gambling, and to require

any legislation to permit gambling to include a referendum requirement and limit the amount of convention center space that may be included.

Stadium Funding

The City of Miami Beach opposes the use of any public funding for renovations to Dolphin Stadium, including but not limited to authorization for local bed taxes as well as a rebate of state sales taxes.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Online Hotel Tax and Sales Tax Collections

The City supports amendments to Florida law to ensure a level playing field for Florida's retailers and hotels by expressly providing that internet firms be required to pay sales taxes on their goods and services, as is required of brick-and-mortar businesses. This will also strengthen Florida's economy by helping retain tourist dollars in Florida rather than being removed from the State by the online companies.

Pension Reform

The City supports legislation that reforms local government pensions in order to ensure the long-term viability of retirement benefits.

Business Tax Receipts

The City of Miami Beach opposes the elimination of the Business Tax Receipt.

Living Wage and Equal Benefits

The City opposes legislation that pre-empts or eliminates the City's Living Wage and Equal Benefits ordinances.

Firearms

The City supports legislation that requires a background check on all firearm transactions.

Windstorm Insurance

The City supports legislation that reforms Citizens Insurance, to help ensure not only that rate increases are minimal, to ensure policyholders receive credits they are entitled to, and that policies that are taken out of Citizens are securely underwritten. Additionally, the City urges the Legislature to take action to ensure that homeowner credits are not discounted.

Red Light Cameras

The City opposes legislation that repeals the authority of local governments to implement traffic control devices (red light cameras).

AGENCY ISSUES

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

- Beach Renourishment - the City strongly urges the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to work with the US Army Corps of Engineers to finally address the critical issue of identifying long-term sand sources for the renourishment of Florida's beaches.

Florida Department of Transportation

- Provide funding to the Florida Department of Transportation for the Interstate-395 expansion project in order to ensure the efficient movement of people and goods

to and from South Beach and the Port of Miami.

- Explore funding opportunities for an East-West transit connector between Miami Beach and the mainland.
- Work with FDOT for final resolution of the lack of a mid-point access to the I-95 Express Lanes.

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

- Windstorm Insurance – the City urges the DEO to advocate for the creation of a Federal Windstorm program.
- Miami Beach Convention Center – Increase awareness of the project as a statewide economic generator, and identify opportunities to create funding options (e.g. legislation, grants, budget authorizations, etc.) to provide for future state support of significant convention center projects.

Florida Building Commission

- Double Permit Fee - the City urges the Florida Building Commission to adopt an amendment to the Florida Building Code giving municipalities authority to waive the mandated double permit fee for work performed without a permit, subject to the Building Official's discretion where equitable circumstances are presented.

EDUCATION ISSUES

The City urges the Legislature to provide additional resources to enhance health care and wellness in schools, and to improve school safety.

The City supports the legislative priorities adopted by Miami Dade County Public Schools.

BUDGET ISSUES

The City urges the Legislature to fully fund the State Film Incentive.

The City will advocate for full funding for Miami Beach-based organizations during the budget process.

Identify and evaluate any potential sources of funding for water-related projects, including stormwater, wastewater, sea-level rise and water delivery, including desalinization activities.

The City supports full funding of workforce development, recreation, cultural arts, historic preservation programs and housing programs.

The City encourages the state to issue bids for hybrid vehicles when procuring vehicles, thereby leveraging buying power and creating a mechanism for local governments to also purchase vehicles from the state contract.

LEGISLATIVE POLICY STATEMENTS

LGBT Issues

The City supports pro-LGBT legislation and opposes legislation that is bad for the LGBT community, including, but not limited to, issues such as gay marriage, adoption, bullying and discrimination.

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Local Authority and Unfunded Mandates

The City opposes legislation that usurps the home rule powers of municipal residents to self-determine their form of government and the services provided. The City will monitor legislative efforts to erode local control and authority, as well as efforts to pass additional costs from the State down to local governments, and work with the League of Cities to identify and reduce the number of unfunded mandates imposed on local government by the State.

CONCLUSION

The Administration will work with the City's lobbyists and continue to monitor state legislative issues and advise the Mayor and City Commission as necessary. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments.


JLM/JJ/kc