

MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

LTC #301-2025

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Honorable Mayor Steven Meiner and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk



DATE: July 18, 2025

SUBJECT: **Hispanic Affairs Committee Motion**

The purpose of this Letter to Commission (LTC) is to inform the Mayor and City Commission of the following Motion passed by the Hispanic Affairs Committee at their July 17, 2025 meeting:

- Members present: Carmen Datorre, Elba Machado, Julian Linares, Gustavo Briand and Natasha Fernandez
- Members absent: Rosary Plana Falero and Chrystianne Lendeborg
- City Liaison: Leonor Hernandez

MOTION:

The Hispanic Affairs Committee supports attached Resolution C7 Y of the July 23, 2025 City of Miami Beach Commission Agenda that strongly opposes dehumanizing and violent rhetoric targeting immigrants, including the "Alligator Alcatraz" detention facility and statements by national leaders; affirm the dignity and contributions of Hispanic and immigrant families in Miami Beach; and reject language and practices that promote hunting down, caging, wrongful detention, celebrating harm against immigrants, including the use of deadly wildlife such as alligators in the Everglades.

The Committee urges that it is imperative that this be a unanimous vote of the City of Miami Beach Mayor and Commissioners.

Motion made by Julian Linares

Motion seconded by Carmen Datorre

Motion unanimously approved by all members present.

REG:lh

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, STRONGLY OPPOSING DEHUMANIZING AND VIOLENT RHETORIC TARGETING IMMIGRANTS, INCLUDING THE “ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ” DETENTION FACILITY AND STATEMENTS BY NATIONAL LEADERS; AFFIRMING THE DIGNITY AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF HISPANIC AND IMMIGRANT FAMILIES IN MIAMI BEACH; AND REJECTING LANGUAGE AND PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE HUNTING DOWN, CAGING, WRONGFUL DETENTION, OR CELEBRATING HARM AGAINST IMMIGRANTS, INCLUDING THE USE OF DEADLY WILDLIFE SUCH AS ALLIGATORS IN THE EVERGLADES.

WHEREAS, the City of Miami Beach is a diverse, inclusive community built and strengthened by generations of immigrants and their families, whose labor, businesses, and culture contribute immeasurably to our economy, resilience, and unique identity; and

WHEREAS, Miami Beach was among the first cities in Florida to pass legal protections for LGBTQ+ residents and visitors, to condemn antisemitism and racism, and to formally recognize and celebrate Juneteenth, Pride Month, and Hispanic Heritage Month, reinforcing its identity as a diverse and inclusive community; and

WHEREAS, this legacy now calls us to speak out clearly and unequivocally against the growing use of violent and dehumanizing rhetoric directed at immigrants — rhetoric that threatens the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of thousands of families who call Miami Beach home; and

WHEREAS, our immigrant residents — many of whom are Hispanic, but also from Haiti, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia, and across the globe — are not criminals to be hunted or caged, but rather workers, caregivers, business owners, artists, and essential members of our economy, our neighborhoods, and our shared civic life; and

WHEREAS, in recent months, national political figures have used rhetoric that dehumanizes immigrants and promotes violence, cruelty, and wrongful detention including:

- On July 1, 2025, President Donald Trump toured a newly established migrant detention facility in the Florida Everglades — colloquially known as “Alligator Alcatraz” — and made remarks referring to detainees as “some of the most vicious people on the planet,” further characterizing the environment and local Everglades wildlife such as alligators as appropriate deterrents to migration ([AP, NYT, July 1–2, 2025]); and
- On June 15, 2025, President Trump posted on Truth Social that “ICE and local police must **hunt them down wherever they are hiding — every resource must be used to root them out and REMOVE them,” pledging to use the National Guard and even active-duty military to carry out the largest mass deportation program in U.S. history ([Reuters, June 15, 2025]); and
- Senior officials in President Trump’s current administration have described immigrants as an “invasion” and have invoked wartime authority to justify mass detentions and deportations (see Presidential Executive Order 14159, “Protecting the American People Against Invasion”); and

- Administration policies have been accompanied by rhetoric portraying immigrants as criminals, threats to national security, and contributors to the “poisoning of the blood” of the nation – echoing historically dangerous language used to justify exclusion and violence ([New York Times, March 18, 2024]); and

WHEREAS, these remarks and the policies they justify have tangible consequences – especially in South Florida, where several recent cases illustrate the real-life consequences of violent rhetoric, harsh enforcement actions, and mistaken identity for law-abiding immigrants:

- In May 2025, Peter Sean Brown, a U.S. citizen, was wrongfully detained in Monroe County at ICE’s request despite valid proof of citizenship — a federal court ruled his constitutional rights were violated ([ACLU Florida, WLRN, May 2025]);
- In April 2025, Juan Carlos López-Gomez, a U.S.-born South Florida resident, was stopped and jailed under an immigration hold despite valid ID, then detained by ICE before release ([WCTV, April 2025]);
- In April 2025, Josué Aguilar Valle, a Honduran immigrant married to a U.S. citizen with an approved petition and a Miami Beach High School Class of 2018 alumnus, was arrested by ICE agents inside the USCIS Kendall office despite no criminal history ([WLRN, April 2025]);

On June 26, 2025, Isidro Pérez, a 75-year-old lawful Cuban resident, died in Krome Detention Center following medical neglect ([WPBF, June 2025]);

WHEREAS, such cases also demonstrate how extreme rhetoric and harsh, broad enforcement approaches can lead to profiling, wrongful detention, family separations, and tragic loss of life — threatening the families who help power Miami Beach’s economy, neighborhoods, and vibrant community life; and

WHEREAS, the senior officials in President Trump’s current administration, including the Secretary of Homeland Security and Press Secretary, speaking about “Alligator Alcatraz,” have described the individuals at the facility as “...illegal murderers and rapists and heinous criminals...”, and have said that facilities such as “Alligator Alcatraz” “and other facilities like it will give us the capability to lock up some of the worst scumbags who enter our country...”([CNN, July 1, 2025]); and

WHEREAS, according to the Deportation Data Project, out of at least 56,000 individuals held in ICE detention nationwide as of mid-June 2025— nearly half (approximately 30,000 people) lack any criminal convictions ([NPR, July 2025]); and

WHEREAS, in parallel, the federal government has initiated efforts that may threaten the legal standing of naturalized U.S. citizens, with the Department of Justice announcing expanded resources to pursue denaturalization cases against citizens accused of errors during the naturalization process, leaving many in our community uncertain and afraid ([Miami Herald, July 2025]); and

WHEREAS, families of detainees being held at the Everglades facility have relayed firsthand to the Miami Herald and other outlets reports of days without showers, lack of clean water, spoiled food infested with maggots, mosquito and bug swarms, extreme temperature swings, and unsanitary toilets in the facility’s temporary tent structures; and

WHEREAS, Miami Beach stands in firm opposition to words and actions that treat all migrants as dangerous criminals and rejects inhumane detention conditions — including reports from the Everglades facility; and

WHEREAS, in a July 3, 2025 statement posted to the Archdiocese of Miami website, Archbishop Thomas Wenski condemned the facility as “alarming” and “unbecoming of public officials,” called enforcement tactics that treat all irregular migrants as dangerous criminals “intentionally provocative,” and warned such rhetoric is “corrosive of the common good”; and

WHEREAS, the vagueness, breadth, and lack of transparency of these initiatives are causing significant anxiety among the South Florida community, where immigrant families, including naturalized citizens, form a vital part of the social fabric, and where many now fear that unclear standards could subject them or their loved ones to arbitrary investigations or loss of rights, despite years of lawful presence and contribution; and

WHEREAS, the values of the Miami Beach community compel us to oppose hate in all its forms — and to stand firmly with immigrant families who, like generations before them, come to our City not to harm, but to build, serve, and contribute.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby strongly oppose dehumanizing and violent rhetoric targeting immigrants, including the “Alligator Alcatraz” detention facility and statements by national leaders; affirm the dignity and contributions of Hispanic and immigrant families in Miami Beach; and reject language and practices that promote hunting down, caging, wrongful detention, or celebrating harm against immigrants, including the use of deadly wildlife such as alligators in the Everglades.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

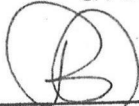
ATTEST:

Steven Meiner, Mayor

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

(sponsored by Commissioner Alex J. Fernandez)

APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION



City Attorney *AK*

7/16/2025
Date