

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE VICE MAYOR AS ACTING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION TO GRANT AN EXPLICIT RIGHT TO VOTE; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND FOR ALL OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Florida state constitution does not establish an explicit right to vote for Florida citizens; and

WHEREAS, generally speaking, in the City of North Miami, only twenty-five (25) percent of voters registered actually exercise their right to vote; and

WHEREAS, language assistance at polling places for limited English-speaking citizens would greatly help with voter turnout; and

WHEREAS, because of lawsuits filed by the Department of Justice against Miami-Dade County, to wit: United States v. Miami-Dade County, No. 02-21698 (S.D. Fla. 2002), for failing to provide adequate resources and opportunities to limited English proficient voters; Miami-Dade County was ordered to take remedial steps to provide equal treatment to non-English speaking voters; and

WHEREAS, the Florida state legislature and executive have passed legislation and executive orders that make voting more difficult for Floridians; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 1355 also curtailed voting rights in 2011, restricting early voting, third-party voter registration, casting provisional ballots, and mandating voter identification are unnecessary and unreasonable restraints on the elective process; and

WHEREAS, Florida ranked first among all states in having the longest wait times at the polls on Election Day in 2012; and

WHEREAS, since 2002, there have been four (4) lawsuits filed in response to alleged Voting Rights Act violations by Florida municipalities, all of which resulted in consent decrees wherein the municipalities agreed to remedy the violation; and

WHEREAS, an individual right to vote is a fundamental American right, and fundamental rights should be expressly guaranteed to all Americans in the U.S. Constitution, to all Floridians in the Florida Constitution, and to all municipal citizens; and

WHEREAS, municipal governments have the power to enact laws and procedures for local elections that meet or surpass federal and state election standards, that create more accountable representation, that uphold voting rights, that encourage increased voter participation, and that promote greater awareness of our political process through civic education; and

WHEREAS, expanding opportunities at local agencies for voter education and non-partisan voter registration beyond the requirements of the National Voter Registration Act would promote more engaged city residents and increase civic participation.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE VICE MAYOR AS ACTING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA:

Section 1. Recitals. The recitals in the whereas clauses are true and correct, and incorporated into this Resolution.

Section 2. Support to Constitutional Amendment. The Vice Mayor as Acting Mayor and City Council of the City of North Miami, Florida, hereby support an amendment to the Florida Constitution that strengthens voting rights for all citizens and urge North Miami residents and other Florida municipalities to support an amendment to the Florida Constitution and the Florida election code that would strengthen each Floridian's fundamental right to vote.

Section 3. Support for Education. The Vice Mayor as Acting Mayor and City Council of the City of North Miami, Florida, hereby support voter education programs, action plans and studies to increase citizenship knowledge and participation in the democratic process.

Section 4. Direction to City Clerk. The City Clerk is hereby directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to President Barack Obama, the Members of the Florida Congressional Delegation, the Miami-Dade County Commission and the League of Cities.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a _____ vote of the Vice Mayor as Acting Mayor and City Council of the City of North Miami, Florida, this _____ day of September, 2014.

PHILIPPE BIEN AIME
VICE MAYOR AS ACTING MAYOR

ATTEST:

MICHAEL A. ETIENNE, ESQ.
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

REGINE M. MONESTIME
CITY ATTORNEY

SPONSORED BY: CITY ADMINISTRATION

Moved by: _____

Seconded by: _____

Vote:

Vice Mayor as Acting Mayor Philippe Bien-Aime
Councilperson Scott Galvin
Councilperson Carol Keys, Esq.
Councilperson Marie Erlande Steril

_____ (Yes) _____ (No)
_____ (Yes) _____ (No)
_____ (Yes) _____ (No)
_____ (Yes) _____ (No)