

**RESOLUTION NO. 2020-R-113**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA, JOINING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AND REQUESTING URGENT ASSISTANCE FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR A COORDINATED AND UNITED COMMITMENT AND FUNDING TO RESTORE AND PROTECT BISCAYNE BAY; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL, AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND ALL OTHER PURPOSES**

**WHEREAS**, Biscayne Bay provides Miami-Dade County residents and visitors with environmental and public health benefits, beauty, and serenity; and

**WHEREAS**, part of Biscayne Bay lies within Biscayne National Park, and this renowned ecosystem provides numerous recreational and commercial opportunities including tourism, fishing, boating, cruising, driving, and sightseeing; and

**WHEREAS**, the health and cleanliness of Biscayne Bay is vital to Greater Miami's community and inextricably linked to the economic and environmental well-being of Miami-Dade County, as well as the rest of the state; and

**WHEREAS**, as reported in the local news, there have recently been unprecedented fish die-offs in Biscayne Bay, and it is believed that the health of Biscayne Bay may be at a critical tipping point; and

**WHEREAS**, water quality in Biscayne Bay is contaminated by sewage leakages, which result in harmful bacteria proliferation; the inflow of eutrophic nutrients, which result in dissolved oxygen depletion and destructive algal blooms; and pollution and littering, which result in mounds of trash being discharged into the Bay via the storm drainage systems; and

**WHEREAS**, seagrass, the foundation of all life in Biscayne Bay which provides habitat for ecologically and economically important fisheries such as shrimp, lobster, and various fish species, has declined significantly in several basin; and

**WHEREAS**, according to a report dated January 29, 2019, on the findings of a Miami-Dade County Division of Environmental Resources Management study on the decline of seagrass

and hardbottom in Biscayne Bay, “catastrophic losses can occur in bodies of water with limited tidal flushing, such as the Julia Tuttle Basin in north Biscayne Bay, and nutrient loads that are both concentrated and frequent”; and

**WHEREAS**, similarly, a report filed on August 8, 2019, by a Grand Jury convened by the Miami-Dade County State Attorney’s Office recognized that “too much nitrogen and phosphorous in the water causes algae to grow faster than the ecosystems can handle”; and

**WHEREAS**, in February 2019, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners created the Biscayne Bay Task Force, whose purpose is to advise the Board and the County Mayor on issues related to Biscayne Bay; and

**WHEREAS**, the overgrowth of algae and other harmful marine vegetation hinders the flood attenuation effects of natural and constructed stormwater conveyances; accordingly, regulations on the use of nutrients, including phosphorus and nitrogen contained in fertilizers, will help improve and maintain water and habitat quality; and

**WHEREAS**, on August 31, 2020, the Biscayne Bay Task Force submitted a comprehensive report with recommendations to the County, urging the County to take action to maintain, restore, and protect Biscayne Bay; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the dire and critical state of the Biscayne Bay, recovery is possible through unified effort and collaboration between local, state, and federal agencies to chart a long-term recovery path towards a healthy and resilient Biscayne Bay; and

**WHEREAS**, at its August 31, 2020, meeting, Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners passed and adopted a series of resolutions, taking the following actions: declaring Biscayne Bay emergency and establishing a policy to prioritize and accelerate actions to address issues related to the health and well-being of Biscayne Bay; directing the County Mayor to review the report and recommendations of the Biscayne Bay Task Force and provide an implementation plan for immediate action; and urging the U.S. Congress and the Florida Legislature to provide additional funding for Biscayne Bay; and

**WHEREAS**, a unified, coordinated approach between local, state, and federal agencies, as well as an educational campaign outreach to the public to improve water quality will ensure the

recovery and preservation of Biscayne Bay for its ecological functions, economic importance, and natural splendor.

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

**Section 1. Recommendation.** The Mayor and City Council hereby request urgent assistance from the State of Florida the Federal Government for coordinated and united commitment and funding to restore and protect Biscayne Bay.

**Section 2. Transmittal.** The City Clerk is hereby directed to transmit copies of this resolution to Governor Ron DeSantis and to United States Environmental Protection Administrator Andrew Wheeler.

**Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution will be effective immediately upon adoption.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by a 5-0 vote of the Mayor and City Council of the City of North Miami, Florida, this 13th day of October, 2020.

  
PHILIPPE BIEN-AIME  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
VANESSA JOSEPH, ESQ.  
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JEFF P. H. CAZEAU, ESQ.  
CITY ATTORNEY

SPONSORED BY: MAYOR PHILIPPE BIEN-AIME AND VICE-MAYOR ALIX DESULME

Moved by: Galvin

Seconded by: Bien-Aime

**Vote:**

Mayor Philippe Bien-Aime

  X   (Yes)        (No)

Vice Mayor Alix Desulme, Ed.D.

  X   (Yes)        (No)

Councilman Scott Galvin

  X   (Yes)        (No)

Councilwoman Carol Keys, Esq.

  X   (Yes)        (No)

Councilwoman Mary Estimé-Irvin

  X   (Yes)        (No)