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Dear Friends and Neighbors:

   When I was elected last November with a mandate=from the people to "fix what's broken and make things work," I was tasked =ith making very difficult decisions. As Mayor, I do not have the liberty t= debate the causes of sea level rise, tidal surge, or climate change, but = am charged with ensuring that Miami Beach, its residents, and its b=sinesses are equipped to handle the effects.

   We have already taken immediate action. &=bsp;Earlier this year the City Commission unanimously voted to raise stand=rds on citywide projects for stormwater planning and there are currently t=ree new pump stations being installed on an emergency basis on lower Alton=Road that will be completed in the coming months.

   It's time to continue moving forward with a comp=ehensive plan for a fortified stormwater drainage system to combat our chr=nic flooding. While some may feel there's time to delay, yesterday, six ou= of the seven members of the City Commission, myself included, voted to in=est in our community's future by increasing stormwater rates. In this econ=mic environment, any form of fee or tax increase is very difficult to do. = commend the five Commissioners who voted "yes" for their courage and for =utting the interests of our City and its residents above self-serving and =hortsighted politics.

   Clearly, if the City had other funds avail=ble to finance this emergency flood prevention program, we would have used=them instead of raising the rates.   The new rates will reflect =n average increase of $7 per month, or approximately $.25 per day for the =ypical household. The funds will be used to finance the reconstruction of =ur antiquated stormwater drainage system, which entails the following prop=sed upgrades:

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* Installation =f 35 large pump stations

* Installation =f 30 smaller pump stations

* Conversion of=21 injection pumps

* Repair of exi=ting outfalls that discharge stormwater and installation of &n=sp;   one-way flex valves

   Moving forward, to finance the remai=der of our flood prevention program, my colleagues and I will explore all =ossible external funding opportunities, including county, state, and feder=l sources.

   As your Mayor, I will never play politics =ith an issue as dire as flooding mitigation in our City. You can alw=ys count on my dedication to doing what's right and to serve the best inte=ests of our residents. I will work day and night to make these improvement= and to make every dollar we spend count. Because when it comes to this ci=y and to the people who live in it, I don't play politics. I play, "Let's =et it done."

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Sincerely,

Philip

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