

September 16, 2024

The Honorable Daniella Levine Cava
Miami-Dade County
111 NW 1st Street Miami, FL 33128
Via email to mayor@miamidade.gov

RE: Innovate, Don't Incinerate. Reject all plans for new waste incinerators in Miami-Dade County

Dear Madam Mayor,

The below-signed organizations, businesses, and churches focused on protecting the public health and quality of life for every Miami-Dade resident, and restoring America's Everglades, urge you to reject all of the sites proposed for a new waste incinerator project and instead invest in alternative forms of waste elimination and production that do not involving burning waste.

There are compelling reasons to reject a new waste incinerator. Incinerators emit a slew of toxins including volatile organic compounds (VOCs), sulfuric acid, nitrogen oxide, mercury, and arsenic. Health burdens documented in environmental justice communities and that can be caused by exposure to incinerator emissions include respiratory problems, cancer, nasal and eye irritation, reproductive harm, and a host of other hazards.¹

Moreover, the pollution from an incinerator in *any* Miami-Dade County location could seriously undermine the ultimate goals of Everglades restoration, Biscayne Bay water quality improvement, and resiliency of the Biscayne Bay and Southeastern Everglades Restoration Project (BBSEER) Project and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project as a whole. The Everglades, coastal estuaries, and residential communities are ultimately a single ecosystem connected through water, land, and air. A threat to one segment of this ecosystem is a threat to all of it.

Please reject the construction of any new incinerator within Miami-Dade boundaries. The solution to our wider community's waste troubles is not to create new troubles for any of our county's neighborhoods or county neighbors to the north. The only humane and

¹ Earthjustice, Re: Comments Submitted on Behalf of Florida Rising on Draft Title V Permit No. 0250348- 013-AV, Proposed in Response to Application for Renewal of the Title V Permit for the Miami-Dade County Resources Recovery Facility, 8-11 (Dec. 20, 2021), available at <https://earthjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/earthjustice-comment-letter-in-opposition-to-miami-dade-rwf-title-v-permit-renewal.pdf>

sustainable solution is one that prioritizes waste reduction, repurposing, reusing, composting, and state-of-the-art waste recycling, to decrease landfill needs, in accordance with the established Hierarchy of Waste². Miami-Dade must focus on waste reduction rather than accommodating increased waste generation.

Don't perpetuate the historical trend of foisting dirty, toxic county utility projects on already overburdened neighborhoods or communities of color. Miami-Dade County can avoid pitting one neighborhood against another — innovation, not incineration, is the answer.

Sincerely,

Brickell Homeowners Association

Ernesto Cuesta, President

Central Florida Jobs with Justice

Chelsea Rivera, Policy Organizer

Climate Reality Project, North Broward and Palm Beach County, FL Chapter

Susan Steinhauser, Co-chair

Earth Ethics, Inc.

Mary Gutierrez, Executive Director

Earthjustice

Dominique Burkhardt, Senior Attorney

Florida For All

Chanae Jackson, Statewide Organizing Director

Florida National Organization for Women

Debbie Deland, President

Florida Rising

MacKenzie Marcelin, Climate Justice Director

² U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Sustainable Materials Management: Non-Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Hierarchy, <https://www.epa.gov/smm/sustainable-materials-management-non-hazardous-materials-and-waste-management-hierarchy>.

Florida Student Power

Alyssa White, Climate Justice Organizer

Friends of Biscayne Bay

Scott Pollowitz, Executive Coordinator

Friends of the Everglades

Eve Samples, Executive Director

LNB Groves, Inc.

Marc Ellenby, President

Miami Climate Alliance

Jeanette Ruiz, Executive Director

Moms in Nature's Defense (MIND)

Catalina Lemaitre, Founder

Nature Coast Conservation

DeeVon Quirolo, President

Palm Beach County Environmental Coalition

Panagioti Tsolkas, Co-chair

Polk Clean Energy Alliance

Katherine Sutherland, President

Reef Relief

Mill McCleary, Executive Director

ReThink Energy Florida

Brian Lee, Campaigns Director

Sierra Club Florida

Susannah Randolph, Chapter Director

South Florida Wildlands Association

Matthew Schwartz, Executive Director

Southern Coalition for Social Justice

Anne Harvey, Chief Counsel for Environmental Justice

Struggle for Miami's Affordable and Sustainable Housing (SMASH)

Adrian Alberto Madriz, Co-Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure

A Zero Waste Culture

Helena Iturralde, Founder

cc:

Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners

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Director, Department of Solid Waste Management (DSWM), Dr. Aniesha Daniel,
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