

## **Protocol Office Escorts of Local Elected Officials Through MIA**

By Robert Steinback, Commission on Ethics Investigator

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### Introduction

In late 2015, a traveler waiting on a long security checkpoint line at Miami International Airport (MIA) noticed a Miami-Dade County Commissioner being escorted past the line, through security and into the gate area by MIA personnel. The traveler brought the observation to the attention of the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust (COE). Subsequent inquiry revealed that the MIA Office of Protocol and International Affairs (Protocol or Office of Protocol) provided the escort. The traveler's observation prompted the COE staff to delve further into the practice.

The MIA Office of Protocol was created to handle the considerable logistical challenge of assuring the safe transit of the airport by domestic and foreign heads of state, government officials and other consular-level dignitaries. Given Miami's strategic location as both a destination and transit hub for travelers to and from South America, Central America and the Caribbean, MIA handles the ingress and egress of more diplomatic dignitaries than any airport in the United States except for the combined volume of the two Washington, D.C., airports. The Office of Protocol bills itself as the only "full protocol service" serving any American airport [See appendix 1].

The Protocol Office escort customarily meets the service receiver at curbside (or in a secure area of the airport, as needed), arranges for the checking of bags, if any, and accompanies the service receiver past security through a separate checkpoint – thereby bypassing the often-lengthy waits that frequently confront average travelers at MIA's security screening checkpoints. The service receiver is then accompanied to the gate. The process is reversed for incoming flight escorts, minus the security screening, which usually doesn't come into play for inbound travelers, but with the added roles of Customs and Border Protection for international travelers. The Protocol Office makes the appropriate security arrangements for dignitaries requiring it.

The task of safely escorting dignitaries through MIA can involve the coordination of every category of law enforcement agency in the nation, from local police to the CIA, FBI, Secret Service and U.S. Marshal's Service. International arrivals and departures are coordinated with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

The COE has become aware that local officials periodically avail themselves of the courtesy escort services of the Protocol Office, even though these officials are not

the sort (sometimes referred to as “high-risk” travelers) who would routinely require special security arrangements.

The Office of Protocol provided to the COE investigator its 2016 procedural manual, subtitled “Courtesies of Port Extended to the Members of the Consular Corps of Miami.” The principal beneficiaries of its service are further defined within as “[m]embers of the Consular Corps of Miami and the Diplomatic Corps Representatives of Foreign Countries accredited to the United States, including Foreign Missions. The same privileges and services are also extended to Honorary Consuls.”

In subsequent interviews with the COE investigator, officials of the airport and the Office of Protocol stated that it will, upon request and if personnel resources are available, extend diplomatic-level courtesies to other traveling dignitaries, including lesser international government actors; state, county and local elected officials, and business executives. Indeed, Office of Protocol officials explained that virtually anyone can request a Protocol Office escort; however, they also conceded that few average travelers are aware of the service or would ever seriously consider making such a request.

This practice on the part of the Office of Protocol of extending diplomatic-level courtesies to local officials raises certain ethical questions, including:

- Is it a proper use of Protocol Office resources to extend diplomatic-level courtesies to local elected officials who rarely, if ever, require the diplomatic, security and border protection services the Office was designed to provide?
- Is it acceptable for local elected or government officials to take advantage of Protocol Office resources as a mere matter of convenience or privilege?
- Are there reasons other than convenience, and the opportunity to bypass long delays in security checkpoint and border control lines, that might justify a local public servant’s use of Protocol Office services?
- To the extent, if any, that provision of such services to local elected officials might be considered appropriate, would this rationale extend to spouses, family members or other associates of the local elected official?

#### Definitions

- A “transit” of the airport, as used herein, represents a single arrival or departure through an airport flight gate.
- A “round-trip” represents the combination of a departure and an arrival for the same trip out of town. The significance for this report is that in many cases discussed below, the traveler booked the Protocol Office’s escort service for both legs of the journey in advance.

## Findings

The COE staff sought to assess the degree to which local public officials have been taking advantage of this service of the Protocol Office. The Protocol Office maintains meticulous records on those who use its services, which formed the basis of this inquiry.

To evaluate how public officials are taking advantage of the Protocol Office's services, the COE staff's chose to examine the MIA travel habits of all 13 County Commissioners, and all 36 Miami-Dade County mayors, from January 2015 through Spring of 2016. The Protocol Office subsequently included earlier travel records, going back to early 2014 for the County Commissioners, and as early as 2010 for the Mayors.

The COE review has determined the following:

- From early 2014 through mid-2016, 11 of the 13 current Miami-Dade County Commissioners collectively took advantage of 241 personal escort transits through Miami International Airport provided by the MIA Office of Protocol. This does not include at least nine (9) escorted transits provided to relatives or spouses of the Commissioners. [See Appendix 2]
- Of the 36 Miami-Dade mayors serving at the time of this study, only three had requested the Protocol Office's escorted transit service during the time period examined, representing a collective 83 transits of MIA. Those three are Carlos Gimenez, the County Mayor (12 transits since April 2012); Tomas Regalado, the Mayor of Miami (45 transits since May 2010, plus 2 transits by his daughter, School Board Member Raquel Regalado); and Carlos Hernandez, the Mayor of Hialeah (26 transits since April 2012, plus 2 transits by his wife Nancy). [See Appendix 3]

## Emergency circumstances

There is scant evidence to suggest that the escort service provided by the Protocol Office to local elected officials is an emergency accommodation for schedule-stressed public servants. Of 324 escorted transits examined by this report, 290, or 89.5 percent, were requested at least a day in advance. The 34 same-day requests include seven (7) by Commissioner Souto and 10 by Commissioner Zapata, each of whom more or less routinely waited until the last moment to reserve the service, even for trips obviously arranged in advance.

The 241 escorted transits of MIA by Commissioners include 105 round trips (210 transits total), meaning, in most cases, that at the moment the Commissioner requested the escort service, plans were made to provide escort services for both legs of the trip. Similarly, the 83 transits of MIA by the three mayors include 38 (76 transits total) apparent round trips. This is further evidence that emergency circumstances peculiar to elected officials did not compel the use of the Protocol escort service by those individuals.

## Public Purposes

To gain insight as to whether the escorted trips through MIA taken by the County Commissioners and Mayors were for public business, the investigator sought explanations for a subset of the identified trips that involved escort services. The investigator focused on commissioners' trips taken in 2015 and through Spring 2016; for Regalado and Hernandez, 2014-2016; and for Gimenez, 2012-2016.

In the case of the Commissioners, the investigator examined copies of travel expense forms, which would only be submitted for trips taken on public business (these are notated in the accompanying chart by the "CC" numbers on the expense forms). In addition, the Commissioners were asked for explanations of any trips for which no reimbursement form was found.

In some cases, the commissioners' travel was funded by membership organizations, interest groups, other governments or private entities. Such trips are also considered by this report as being for a public purpose.

Gimenez' staff provided the accounting of his travels. Regalado responded directly to the request for explanations of the trips.

In the case of Hernandez, the Hialeah City Clerk explained that the mayor pays for all city-related travel through his salary and doesn't submit travel expense records. Therefore, the investigator asked for copies of the mayor's calendar for the noted days of travel. The staff said it could not elaborate on discrepancies or gaps in the Mayor's calendar record.

While it is difficult to be precise, it appears that of the 188 transits for which explanations were sought, 84.0 percent (158 of 188) were for public-related business. The remaining 30 cases were either identified as personal, or no public purpose explanation was provided, and thus are presumed to be personal in nature.

A breakdown follows:

Barbara Jordan – All three (3) of Jordan's escorted trips during 2015, representing five (5) total escorted MIA transits, were described as personal, reportedly to attend to a sick daughter.

Jean Monestime – Of his 18 trips during the period (representing 36 total escorted MIA transits), two (2) were unexplained and one (1) was personal (to attend his mother's funeral in Haiti). On one of the two unexplained trips, Monestime traveled with 11 other people, including his wife, all of whom were escorted through MIA by the Protocol Office. A public purpose was identified for the other 15 trips.

Audrey Edmonson – All six (6) of Edmonson's escorted trips during the period (representing 12 MIA transits) were for an identified public purpose.

Sally Heyman – The most prolific Commission user of the Office of Protocol’s escort service, Heyman made 22 trips during the examined period (representing 45 airport transits) during the period examined. All of those trips were for an identified public service, however, on at least three occasions, Heyman appears to have combined work and personal trips, such as July 24-Aug. 11, 2015 (an 18-day trip) and Sept. 29-Oct. 11, 2015 (a 13-day trip for a conference that ended Oct. 2). Also, the explanation given for a trip from Aug. 27-Sep 8, 2015 (a 12-day trip), was simply, “Congresswoman Kosmas,” but Congresswoman Suzanne Kosmas of Florida’s 24<sup>th</sup> district served only from 2009-2010. Also noted: A 9-day trip (May 12-21, 2016). On Aug. 23, 2015, the Protocol office shows an outbound and inbound transit by Heyman, but her office reported that “she did not travel” on that day. The discrepancy is unexplained.

Bruno Barreiro – did not use the Protocol Office service.

Rebeca Sosa – During the period examined, Sosa used the Protocol Office escort service for four (4) trips. Her staff identified two (2) of these trips as for public business. Of the other two, one (1) was identified as an “emergency” trip to visit a sick relative; this trip was taken with her daughter Veronica, who also availed herself of the escort service, which was reserved nine (9) days in advance. The other was identified as prompted by a death in the family, and was reserved four (4) days in advance.

The Protocol Office also lists five escorted transits (three trips) provided to Guadalupe Diaz, the Commissioner’s sister. These are unexplained.

Xavier Suarez – His single use of the escort service was for a trip identified by his staff as personal. Suarez later explained that he had not requested the escort, but rather had it offered to him ad hoc by the Protocol Office, which wanted to brief him on some airport development while he was at the airport.

Daniella Levine-Cava – During the period examined, Levine-Cava used the Protocol Office escort service six (6) times (including one round-trip representing two (2) transits). Five of those instances are associated with public business; staff identified one (1) trip as personal.

Dennis Moss – did not use the Protocol Office service.

Javier Souto – During the period examined, Souto used the Protocol Office escort service seven (7) times (representing 14 transits), each for an identified public purpose.

Juan Zapata – During the period examined, Zapata used the escort service for five (5) trips (representing 5 transits). Four (4) of these trips are identified as public business. On the fifth occasion, Zapata’s staff reported that “the Commissioner said that it’s possible that the nature of his trip on March 29, 2015 was personal but he does not recall.” This trip is logged herein as personal.

On an earlier occasion, in 2014, the Protocol Office provided escort service to Rosa and Jaime Zapata, identified as relatives of the Commissioner.

Jose Diaz – During the period examined, Diaz used the escort service for eight (8) trips (all round trips, representing 16 transits), all identified as public business. On one of those trips, to a trade show in Marseille, France, the Commissioner was escorted through MIA accompanied by his wife.

Esteban Bovo – Although Bovo has used the Protocol Office’s escort service, none of those instances occurred within the initial period examined by the investigator, so no explanation of the purposes of his trips was obtained. Of the four occasions documented, Bovo twice traveled with his wife Viviana, and twice with “others” not identified by the Protocol Office. One (1) time in 2016, Viviana Bovo, identified as a staff member for Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, utilized the escort service on her own.

Mayor Tomas Regalado, Miami – During the period examined (2014-16), Regalado used the Protocol Office escort service for nine (9) trips representing 18 transits. Regalado, responding personally to the investigator’s request, identified all of the trips as for a public purpose. During at least two of these trips, the Mayor traveled with unidentified others who also used the protocol service (once, four others, once, five others). On a trip in 2010, the Mayor’s son traveled with him and utilized the escort service. On two occasions, the Mayor traveled with his daughter, Raquel, who was a sitting Miami-Dade School Board member, and utilized the escort service.

Mayor Carlos Gimenez – During the period examined (since 2012), Gimenez used the Protocol Office escort service for seven (7) trips representing 12 transits. All of the trips are notated by his staff as being for a public purpose.

Mayor Carlos Hernandez – Over the course of three years examined, Hernandez appears to have used the Protocol Office escort service for public business for eight (8) trips representing 14 transits, and for seven other (7) unexplained trips representing 10 transits. It can only be assumed that the trips not explained by Hernandez’ calendar represented personal travel as Hernandez’ staff said it could not elaborate beyond entries found on the calendar itself. For one of the unexplained trips (a round-trip, representing two (2) transits), Hernandez’ wife traveled with him and also utilized the Protocol Office escort.

#### Protocol Office administrative response

The COE investigator and advocate met with MIA Aviation Director Emilio Gonzalez, MIA Deputy Aviation Director Ken Pyatt, Chief of Staff Joseph Napoli, and Senior Executive Assistant to the Aviation Director Hiram Barroso to discuss a draft of this Protocol Office report.

Gonzalez explained that MIA is the second largest international gateway in the United States. The Protocol Office is charged with handling foreign VIPs, ministers, kings and others of similar rank, also serves as a State Department interface.

The office “also takes care of individuals that reach out to us,” including the traveling public, Gonzalez said.

Pyatt emphasized that the office will turn down escort requests any time the staff is too busy to allow accommodation.

Gonzalez emphasized that he did not consider utilization of the services of the Protocol Office by local elected officials in any way a burden. “I consider this to be an amenity of a world-class airport.” He added that the 324 escorted transits provided to County Commissioners and Mayors identified in this report (covering more than a year’s time) represent only a fraction of the 7,000 to 8,000 escorted transits the office performs every year.

Pyatt added that services are provided whenever requested, but “not at the expense of the primary purpose of the Protocol Office.” The point was reiterated several times that the Office will decline requests if the staff isn’t available or is tied up with other responsibilities. The officials did not offer data on how many requests for service has been declined.

Napoli stated that his concern was that the Protocol Office staff might be placed in the position of having to ask service requesters the purpose of their trip and then needing to determine if the answer met certain criteria before providing service, which the airport representatives agreed would be an unwelcome burden. Gonzalez added that it would be similarly problematic for staffers to have to determine what constituted an “emergency” for an elected official if that were the standard required.

Gonzalez said that it was his preference that the decision of whether a request for service were an unacceptable burden be left up to the staff, which can determine on its own if the office has the resources to provide the service.

### Airport Survey

The author of this report contacted other major airports in Florida, and also major East Coast international airports, to compare how those facilities handled VIP travelers with the operations of MIA’s Office of Protocol. The airports contacted were: Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (Fort Lauderdale), Tampa International Airport (Tampa), Orlando International Airport (Orlando), Tallahassee International Airport (Tallahassee), John F. Kennedy International Airport (New York City), Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (Atlanta) and Washington Dulles International Airport (Washington, D.C.).

Of these facilities, only Atlanta operates a discrete office designated to oversee diplomatic-level travelers. In the other facilities, diplomatic travelers are handled through the cooperative efforts of airport operations staff, local police and federal law enforcement and security agencies.

None of the airport representatives surveyed expressed any issue at all with local officials taking advantage of the diplomat-level security and courtesy extended by the airports. This may be, in part, due to the lack of a discrete office dedicated to handling VIP travelers, except in the case of Atlanta, where the office providing that service maintains an explicit list of who is entitled to such a service. The lowest-ranking title on that list is "consul general."

Several of the airports did acknowledge that there might be occasions when a VIP traveler other than obvious diplomatic corps or heads of state, might be offered some limited traveler courtesies if staffing allowed.

**Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport** – David Arthur, assistant county attorney for Broward County assigned to the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, said Broward's airport does not have an office dedicated solely to handling dignitaries and other VIPs, and has no formal VIP policy. Generally, the Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO) works together with the Transportation Security Authority (TSA) when travelers requiring heightened security transit the airport.

Arthur said he could not remember an occasion when a County Commissioner requested special airport treatment. He said there were numerous occasions when a Congressperson or Senator came through the airport, and in those instances, BSO and TSA handled all arrangements.

**Tampa International Airport** – Sgt. Jason Thomas said that the Tampa International Airport Police Department (TIAPD), which is independent of other municipal Bay-area police departments, "provides traditional law enforcement services in addition to enforcing federal regulations associated with transportation security."

The Tampa airport has no independent protocol office; the TIAPD coordinates whatever security protocols are required when dignitaries come to the airport. Thomas said such occasions arise typically when a controlling security agency, such as the Secret Service, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Florida Highway Patrol or some other agency contacts his department for assistance.

Thomas said the security plan for the dignitary's transit is typically provided by the controlling security agency. He said it almost never happens that an individual seeking special treatment would directly contact the department. "If [you are] contacting us [directly], chances are you're not a dignitary," Thomas said.



Thomas said his department rarely accommodates "celebrity" arrivals or others who don't have a demonstrated need for security treatment. "If you think you're important and you want extra security, you have to pay for it," Thomas said.

Thomas said that if someone of the status of, say, the Mayor, were seeking a courtesy escort, the request would probably come first from the Hillsborough Sheriff's Department. He said the request would probably be honored if it required no more than having some extra officers nearby. In any case, what service the department offers does NOT include accompanying the official past the security checkpoint line. Special considerations regarding security, if any, are handled exclusively by the TSA, which operates the checkpoints.

Requests prompted by specific threats would be handled accordingly, he said.

Thomas said his department would never just issue a blanket "no" to a request for special treatment from a lower-rung official or celebrity, but it would inquire about the nature of the request, e.g., "What exactly are you looking for," Thomas said. Thomas indicated that his department would likely reject a request that seemed to asking strictly for courtesy special treatment absent a defined security need.

**Orlando International Airport** – Tom Draper, director of airport operations.

Draper said that Orlando International does not have a formal protocol office. The handling of VIPs and dignitaries is handled jointly by the Airport Operations office (his office) and Public Affairs. Requests for VIP handling would normally come from a consular corps or embassy official. That service would typically include having a representative of the Operations staff meet the individual at the curb or gate and escorting them through the airport. This could include expedited treatment through Customs. Depending on the status level of the dignitary, this might also mean clearing security and Customs in a more-private "secondary screening" area of the airport, although at the moment the airport doesn't have an area specifically dedicated to this.

Draper said that the State Department typically determines what level of special attention a consular-level traveler needs.

Draper emphasized that his staff will provide expedited service for any traveler that requests it, particularly if they require special assistance to make a flight if they are stuck in a line or have some other risk of not making a flight. "You [the investigator] could do this. We offer it to anyone in the community," Draper said.

Draper said his staff would rather go out of its way to help a beleaguered passenger than have to deal later with a traveler's complaints about a bad experience.

Specifically regarding local officials who might seek VIP treatment more as a perk of office than as a resolution of a complication, Draper said, "I don't think we have anyone who has done that." In fact, Draper said his office often gets word that a

local elected official might be traveling on business, and will actually reach out to that traveler to offer expedited service. Generally speaking, Draper said, "they don't ask." Draper said his staff does this so regularly that a perception among local elected officials might be that they are regularly scoring VIP treatment. However, in the larger picture, actually expediting the transit of a local official occurs still happens infrequently, "not daily or [even] once a week." Draper praised the current crop of local politicians, who don't seem inclined to abuse the system. "We are very fortunate that the majority of our commissioners aren't into a lot of pomp and privilege."

If the problem of an overly demanding local official did arise, or if someone started asking for favors for "their lawn guy," Draper said he would try to get the word to the offender quietly through channels, working through the Aviation Authority Board [an independent body made up of government officials and gubernatorial appointees which oversees the airport] or that Board's executive director.

**Tallahassee International Airport** – Jim Durwin, Superintendent of Airport Operations.

Durwin said the Tallahassee Airport is run by the City of Tallahassee. It is a small airport that doesn't get a high volume of consular-level travelers. On those occasions, his office and the Airport Police Unit of the Tallahassee Police Department will coordinate with the dignitary's particular security detail. His office will also extend escort courtesies on occasion to recognizable celebrities, including providing them with a private place to wait away from the public, if requested.

Durwin emphasized that given the size of the airport, travelers rarely face significant terminal delays at all, and so there wouldn't be much advantage to be gained by asking for a special escort in any case.

As the state capital's airport, the facility regularly handles state legislators and other city, county and state government officials. In all such cases, Durwin said, "They get no special treatment at all." He emphasized that neither the city's commissioners, who are responsible for running the airport, nor Leon County Commissioners are provided with any special treatment while transiting the airport.

**John F. Kennedy International Airport** – Dan Rothman, Integrity Officer for the New York Field Office, Customs and Border Protection.

Rothman said JFK does not have a separate office that handles diplomatic passengers, but that Customs and Border Patrol [i.e., the federal government] is responsible for handling of all passengers from the gate to outside Customs; TSA and other local law enforcement handles the areas outside. Any agency operating within the Customs' FIS (Federal Inspection Station) Zone must have Customs' approval. Certain officers can be assigned to points of contact with VIPs, "We have

people assigned to that among other duties." Such assignments must be signed off by superiors.

Rothman said given the frequency of international state travelers in and out of New York (particularly given the presence of the United Nations), JFK agencies are well trained in cooperating and coordination with other agencies and the staffs of dignitaries (such as the governor or a senator).

Situations are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, Rothman said. He said there are "no books on who gets what or doesn't." His agency evaluates, Is the request reasonable? And, Do we have the manpower to handle it? Rothman said most requests that aren't obvious diplomats are simply of a "meet and greet" variety. The service provided does not include personal escorts through the secure airport areas, and such requests can be denied. "The same person could be denied at one time, but approved at another," Rothman said.

Rothman said JFK has separate, marked "diplomatic lanes" to help provide immediate attention to VIP travelers. This is treatment that can be requested, and can be denied if operations staff cannot handle the additional service. "Everything is based on our ability to accommodate," Rothman said.

**Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport** – Alrene Barr, director of international business.

Barr said that her office coordinates the arrivals and departures of diplomatic-level travelers. She said that the lowest title her office will accommodate is Consul General. Barr said that local officials (comparable would be City Commissioners, as Hartsfield-Jackson is owned and run by the City of Atlanta) "know better than to call this office. They know not to ask" for special treatment by her office.

Barr said that the Atlanta mayor travels with his own detail, with whom her office will coordinate when he transits Hartsfield-Jackson.

Barr said her office employs two protocol officers, who are each responsible for two or three international regions. Customs and Border Protection (incoming travelers), the State Department, TSA (outbound travelers) and other agencies will coordinate through her office to handle VIPs.

Barr said her office maintains an "Order of Priority" list which outlines who is entitled to the diplomatic courtesies and services offered by her department.

Barr said her office also handles matters related to international business and developing such business for the City of Atlanta.

## **Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority/Dulles International**

Rick Rodine, IAD Supervisory Duty Manager for Washington Dulles International Airport in Washington, D.C., responded to the investigator's inquiry by forwarding a copy of the Orders & Instructions pamphlet that went into effect in October 2016, which covers the "special handling of dignitaries and high-risk people at Washington Dulles International Airport.

Under "policy," the order states, "Dulles Airport will honor requests for special accommodations for VIPs to the extent practical. Requests must be made to Airport Operations [...] VIPs are people identified by the State Department, Secret Service or other federal and state agencies responsible for the handling of dignitaries and high-risk people, including:

- The President, Vice President, Former Presidents and Vice Presidents of the United States and their families;
- Heads of state and government;
- Ambassador designates on their initial arrival to Washington, D.C.;
- Cabinet heads [enumerated];
- Positions with Cabinet status [e.g.] White House Chief of Staff, [etc.]
- Speaker of the House and Senate President Pro-Tempore [...]
- Supreme Court Justices
- Governors of Virginia and Maryland, the Mayor of Washington, D.C.

VIPs also include other individuals and groups who have been identified and approved by Airport Operations as warranting special handling."

### Analysis

It should be noted that MIA and its attendant airlines provide to all travelers a vast array of services, including curbside baggage check-in, wheelchair assistance, redcap services and more. Many of those services are required by law, such as those mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Air Carrier Access Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In addition, MIA provides a webpage, [http://www.miami-airport.com/disabled\\_passenger.asp](http://www.miami-airport.com/disabled_passenger.asp), to assist disabled passengers in finding the assistance they need, typically directing passengers to the services provided by the airlines.

It seems fair to conclude then, that the MIA Office of Protocol provides no ambulatory or baggage handling service to local elected officials that is not readily available to the general public from the airlines or, in some cases, the airport itself.

What the Office of Protocol does provide is a handy means of escaping the often-problematic security checkpoint lines that are the bane of air travel for members of the general public. While there may be hypothetical scenarios under which a public official, on public business, might need expedited transit of the airport past normal security screening efforts – for example, presence at a late-running hearing in one venue combined with the need to catch a particular flight for an obligation in

another city – this rarely, if ever, seems to be the case for the examined public officials. Roughly 90 percent of the time, the public official requested the escorted transit more than a day in advance, which largely eliminates the scenario of a last-minute emergency accommodation.

It should be noted that the federal Transportation Security Administration (TSA), which has run airport security since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, offers to frequent travelers a special registration service, called TSA-Pre-check, that can help participants avoid the most bothersome aspects of the security check and speed them past the normal lines. It is described on the TSA webpage thus: "With a 5-year, \$85 membership, you can speed through security and don't need to remove your shoes, laptops, liquids, belts and light jackets." The nominal cost of this registration would seem to be a justifiable expense for the frequently traveling elected official, and would expedite passage to departure gates.

Elected officials, on occasion, will travel with spouses or family members while on public business. Well-established policy requires that those accompanying the elected official on such trips pay for their own expenses. The Protocol Office, as is the case with the entire airport operation, is funded by airport fees, with no direct taxpayer dollars involved. Whether a spouse or relative has accepted an undeserved perk by accompanying a public official on an escorted transit of the airport depends on one's acceptance of the Protocol Office's assertion that its services are technically available to anyone who asks, not just dignitaries. In such a case, an escorted transit by a spouse or family member would not be improper. But if one views an escorted transit of the airport as an undeserved privilege afforded to local elected officials by virtue of their simply holding the office, then the escorted transits by family members would represent an addition level of questionable propriety.

A check of four other large-city airports in Florida (Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, Tallahassee and Orlando) and three other major city international airports on the East Coast (New York/John F. Kennedy, Washington/Dulles and Atlanta), reveals that none of these has a Protocol Office that operates as does the one at Miami International. In each case, Airport Operations, or the lead local police department, coordinates VIP and diplomatic-level requests with the involved agencies. The Atlanta airport has a discrete office that handles VIP travelers, but also handles a range of international business-development responsibilities.

The strategies employed by each airport contain "wiggle room," within which judgments can be made to extend VIP treatment to those who might not customarily be regarded as requiring such handling. Dulles in particular, thanks to its very explicit guidelines, seems to allow for the least amount of such "wiggle room." It is the evaluation of the investigator that Miami International's rules and practices for determining who can utilize such special handling services are, by far, the most subject to on-the-spot discretion. Indeed, Protocol Office officials themselves insist that their services are literally available to anyone who asks, resources permitting, while conceding that few average travelers avail themselves of that service.

It can be inferred that the simple fact that MIA alone has a convenient, one-stop office that can quickly respond to requests for special VIP treatment, might actually invite excessive use of the service by local public officials. For all of the other airports surveyed, the simple task of finding the right person to ask to request such service – for average travelers who do not customarily require such handling – might prove more daunting than the effort would warrant. The fact that obtaining VIP treatment at the other airports (except Atlanta) would involve working through a law enforcement or security agency rather than a civilian agency might also serve as a deterrent to superfluous use.

## **Conclusion**

It is suggested that local elected officials restrain themselves from utilizing the Protocol Office's services for the following reasons:

1. It seems clear that the Protocol Office was created primarily to deal with traveling foreign dignitaries, royalty and presidents who often travel with security details. As noted previously, the task of safely escorting dignitaries through MIA can involve the coordination of every category of law enforcement agency in the nation, from local police to the CIA, FBI, Secret Service and U.S. Marshal's Service. International arrivals and departures are coordinated with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Few, if any, local elected officials require such a heightened level of security.
2. Although the airport administration insists they provide protocol services to anyone who requests it, provided the resources are available, it is unrealistic to believe that a request from a Mayor or County Commissioner would ever be declined. No records are kept of requests that were denied. However, a call from a Mayor or County Commissioner's office is likely treated with more deference than a call from an average citizen. So, while protocol services theoretically are available to anyone who asks, the reality is that elected officials, by virtue of their office, are likely to receive special treatment unavailable to the public at large.
3. Local officials are public servants. Public servants should act in a manner that reflects transparency and acknowledges the supremacy of the public interest. Public servants by definition are in place to serve others and that is the only kind of power they are entitled to wield. Accessing special protocol services that whisk a traveler through airport security lines, especially when that travel is for personal reasons or for non-urgent public business, evidences an air of superiority and entitlement by elected officials that causes an appearance of impropriety that strains the bonds of the public's trust.

There has been no documented abuse of the existing protocol policy for special escorts at MIA that would justify the filing of an ethics complaint against a public official for a violation of Section 2-11.1(g) of County Ethics Code, Exploitation of

Official Position. The protocol policy at MIA, lax as it is, has evolved over the years to permit its occasional use upon request by local elected officials, some of whom have become accustomed to receiving the special service. There is no indication that any local official has exploited his or her position by demanding access to a service that has not been routinely offered to such officials in accordance with airport policies.

Nonetheless, it is difficult to justify the use of such resources to offer free VIP service to local officials not facing some urgent public necessity in the performance of their official duties. In an age when security issues abound at airports, including those related to possible terrorist activities, a policy of routinely offering such unnecessary courtesies that can create diversions from necessary security activities is highly questionable. Moreover, the image of local public officials being specially escorted through security lines for non-emergency trips, including personal family excursions, while other travelers wait patiently in line, is likely to be offensive to the traveling and taxpaying public.

Therefore, it is recommended that local, elected and appointed officials refrain from taking advantage of MIA protocol services except, perhaps, in the rare emergency situation where time constraints of traveling on public business make going through the normal course of security clearance impractical. In no event should protocol services be used when an elected or appointed official is travelling on personal business. We point out, as earlier noted in this report, that virtually every commercial airline offers similar amenities, such as curbside baggage check and wheelchair pick-up as the protocol services, and the TSA'S pre-check service can help participants avoid the most bothersome aspects of the security check and speed them past the normal lines.

It is understood that circumstances may arise that would require special security arrangements to protect an official from potential physical harm at the airport. Examples might include a known threat made against a public official or the existence of potentially violent political protests against an official. It should be obvious that a reasonable protocol policy would provide for appropriate security arrangements to protect the safety of a threatened official in such circumstances.

Any policy restricting the usage of the protocol service should be made flexible to accommodate the special circumstances of the Mayor of Miami-Dade County. As a "strong mayor" who acts both as Chief Executive Officer as well as Head of State for the Miami-Dade County government, the County Mayor is on duty 24 hours a day and likely maintains the tightest schedule of any local official in order to cover the extensive responsibilities of that office. It would be not be unreasonable to make the service available to the County Mayor on a regular, unscheduled basis in view of the unique circumstances of the position.

The executive staff of the Protocol Office has indicated that it would be within its capabilities to issue an annual or semiannual report on use of its escort services by specified government officials, if requested.

It is recommended that the Aviation Department create a policy, similar to those in effect at other major U.S. airports, that makes more appropriate use of protocol office and security personnel.

Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust

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Joseph Centorino  
Executive Director

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Michael Murawski  
Advocate

[Continue to next page for Appendices]



## **APPENDIX 1**

### Office of Protocol and International Affairs webpage Information

The Office of Protocol and International Affairs has its own webpage, which features the following information:

#### **MISSION**

The core mission of the Protocol Office is to facilitate the arrivals and departures of official guests through MIA and create a lasting good impression of our community. The Protocol Office is staffed by a corps of officers, specially trained in the field of protocol and diplomacy. Protocol Officers speak many foreign languages, which include Spanish, German, French, Portuguese, Russian, Polish, Italian and Creole. Protocol details are performed 365 days a year from 7am to 11pm.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Protocol Office coordinates all logistics associated with diplomatic arrivals/departures with representatives of the airlines operating at MIA and with U.S. government agencies such as Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Secret Service, the Department of State, the Transportation and Security Administration (TSA), and the Office of Foreign Mission. Support in these functions is also received from other agencies and entities such as the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

#### **FACTS AND STATS**

Miami International Airport is the first airport in the nation and one of the very few major airports in the world to provide protocol services. It is also the number one airport in the U.S. for international diplomatic traffic with the exception of the two major airports in Washington D.C. combined.

- Still the only airport in the nation with a full protocol service
- Approximately 5, 500 protocol details for the year
- A total of 337 heads of states including, presidents and other heads of governments used our services
- 30 royal parties including reigning monarchs from Europe, Middle East Asia and Africa used our services
- Approximately 100 planeside arrivals and departures were serviced
- Still the only airport in the nation with specially dedicated VIP facilities to accommodate foreign dignitaries

## APPENDIX 2

### COMMISSIONERS' AND MAYORS' PROTOCOL TRIPS

#### County Commissioners

##### Investigator's summary

The investigator initially sought explanations only for Commissioners' trips through MIA for 2015 through Spring 2016. Travel data outside of these dates was subsequently received and has been incorporated into this report, but explanations for travel on those occasions were not requested. In the appendix below, these occasions are represented by "not asked" under "Explanation."

"Accom" represents "accompanied by."

"Advan" represents the days in advance of travel the escort was booked.

"R/T," or round/trip, represents the inbound leg of the associated outbound trip, and a separate use of the Protocol Office escort service.

#### BARBARA JORDAN – District 1

Commissioner Jordan has used the escort service of the Protocol Office 11 times, five of those round trips. On each occasion, the Commissioner traveled with two other people who are not identified.

Since 2015, Commissioner Jordan has never used the service for county-related business (she did not submit forms for reimbursement for any trip) but rather only for personal business. Though the trips in 2015 are identified as trips to see a sick daughter, the flights and escorts were planned between 2 and 26 days in advance.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
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#### 2014

April 29	May 2	+3	Departure	Not asked; traveled with two others
April 29	May 4	R/T	Arrival	
May 7	May 15	+8	Departure	Not asked; traveled with two others
May 7	May 24	R/T	Arrival	
Oct 28	Oct 30	+2	Departure	Not asked; traveled with two others
Oct 28	Nov 3	R/T	Arrival	

#### 2015

Aug 19	Aug 21	+2	Arrival	*Personal; sick daughter; traveled with 2 others
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Sept 10	Sept 23	+13	Departure	*Personal; sick daughter; traveled with 2 others
Sept 10	Sept 30	R/T	Arrival	
Oct 30	Nov 24	+26	Departure	*Personal; sick daughter; traveled with 2 others
Oct 30	Nov 29	R/T	Arrival	

\*Per 6/16/16 E-mail from Staff Member Andre Ragin

**JEAN MONESTIME—District 2**

Chairman Monestime has used the Protocol Office’s escort service 49 times during the period observed, including 23 round trips. With only four exceptions, the Commissioner reserved the service three days or less in advance.

On two occasions (a departure on March 13, 2015, and an arrival on June 20, 2015), Monestime’s wife Ketia Monestime utilized the escort service, each time traveling with her husband. On the former occasion, she apparently accompanied her husband on a trip to Cap Haitien, Haiti, for a visit to the Shalom Village Orphanage. Only the Chairman is shown returning to Miami three days later; Mrs. Monestime apparently returned at a different time and did not utilize the service on arrival.

On the latter occasion, June 12, no explanation or destination for the trip has been provided. Eleven people accompanied Chairman Monestime during the outbound flight June 12, requested 22 days in advance (May 21). On the same day, May 21, Monestime requested an escort for himself and his wife on June 20 (a full 30 days in advance)

Since 2015, Monestime provides explanations for all trips except May 29, 2015 and June 12, 2015 (as noted earlier)

Escort Request   Travel date   Advance   Dep/Arr   Explanation

**2014**

Mar 26	Mar 28	+2	Departure	Not asked
Mar 26	Mar 30	R/T	Arrival	
May 6	May 7	+1	Departure	Not asked
May 6	May 9	R/T	Arrival	
Sept 30	Oct 2	+3	Departure	Not asked
Sept 30	Oct 4	R/T	Arrival	
Oct 21	Nov 11	+21	Departure	Not asked
Oct 21	Nov 19	R/T	Arrival	

**2015**

Mar 10	Mar 13	+3	Departure	CC15055 Cap Haitien; Shalom Vlg Orphanage
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Mar 10 Mar 10	Mar 13 Mar 16	Accom R/T	Departure Arrival	Ketia Monestime (spouse of Chairman) (Ketia Monestime not present)
Mar 17 Mar 17	Mar 18 Mar 19	+1 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15075 Tallahassee; Meet w/legislators
Apr 6 Apr 6	Apr 7 Apr 9	+1 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15079 Tallahassee; Dade County Days
Apr 13 Apr 16	Apr 14 Apr 16	+1 0-R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15093 Wash DC; meet w/Hse, Senate mbrs
Apr 21 Apr 21	Apr 22 Apr 26	+1 R/T	Departure Arrival	*Mother's funeral, Haiti
*Per 6/14 E-mail from Mac-Kinley Lauriston				
May 28	May 29	+1	Departure	No explanation provided
May 21 May 21 May 21	Jun 12 Jun 20 Jun 20	+22 Accom R/T	Departure Departure Arrival	No explan. provided; traveled w/ 11 people. Ketia Monestime (spouse of Chairman) (Ketia Monestime not present)
Jun 26 Jun 26	Jul 1 Jul 5	+5 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC--- Haiti; Sister port agmt; Accom by 10
Jul 6 Jul 13 Jul 13 Jul 13	Jul 6 Jul 13 Jul 14 Jul 24	0 0 +1 +11	Departure Arrival Departure Arrival	CC15116 Snr Execs St/Lcl Govt, Harvrd, Jun 6-24 Probable mid-course home visit
Aug 4 Aug 4	Aug 5 Aug 7	+1 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15137 Denver Transportation Fly-In Aug 5-7
Aug 19 Aug 20	Aug 21 Aug 24	+2 +4-R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15145 Port-au-Prince; Carifesta XII Aug 21-24
Sep 9 Sep 10	Sep 10 Sep 11	+1 +1-R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15155 Wash DC; meet w/Hse/Snte members
Sep 17 Sep 18 Sep 17 Sep 18	Sep 18 Sep 18 Sep 21 Sep 21	+1 0 R/T --	Departure Arrival Arrival Not indicated	CC15154 Wash DC; Cong Blk Caucus Sept 16-20 (Not clear why there are two arrival requests) (Explanation unknown; poss. Flight change?)
Sep 23 Sep 23	Sep 24 Sep 26	+1 R/T	Departure Arrival	*MPO – no further detail provided
*Per 6/14/16 E-mail from Mac-Kinley Lauriston				

Nov 3	Nov 4	+1	Departure	CC16012 Tallahse; meet with state legislators
Nov 3	Nov 4	--	Not indicated	(Explanation unknown; poss. Flight change?)
Nov 3	Nov 5	+2	Arrival	

**2016**

Feb 1	Feb 2	+1	Departure	CC16054 Talahsee; Fla Assn of Counties Feb 2-5
Feb 1	Feb 5	R/T	Arrival	
Feb 9	Feb 9	0	Departure	CC16059 Talahsee; Dade Cty Days Feb 9-10
Feb 9	Feb 10	R/T	Arrival	
Apr 7	Apr 7	0	Departure	Not asked
Apr 7	Apr 9	R/T	Arrival	
Apr 21	Apr 22	+1	Departure	Not asked
Apr 21	Apr 25	R/T	Arrival	
May 25	May 25	0	Departure	Not asked

AUDREY EDMONSON – District 3

Commissioner Edmonson has used the Escort service 19 times, including 9 round-trips. In all cases since 2015, the Commissioner submitted reimbursement forms for the trips as County-business related.

Commissioner Edmonson reserved the service between 2 and 14 days in advance.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
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**2014**

Mar 5	Mar 10	+5	Arrival	Not asked
Jul 7	Jul 10	+3	Departure	Not asked
Jul 7	Jul 14	R/T	Arrival	
Jul 24	Aug 7	+14	Departure	Not asked
Jul 24	Aug 8	R/T	Arrival	
Oct 10	Oct 14	+4	Departure	Not asked
Oct 10	Oct 17	R/T	Arrival	

**2015**

Jan 16	Jan 21	+5	Departure	CC15026 Charleston; NACo Jan 21-23
Jan 16	Jan 23	R/T	Arrival	

Feb 5	Feb 8	+3	Departure	CC15043 San Antonio; small biz conference
Feb 5	Feb 10	R/T	Arrival	
Jul 6	Jul 9	+7	Departure	CC15122 Charlotte; Annual Conf and Expo
Jul 6	Jul 13	R/T	Arrival	
Sep 15	Sep 18	+3	Departure	CC15156 Wash DC, Cong Black Cauc Sep 15-18
Sep 15	Sep 20	R/T	Arrival	

**2016**

Feb 5	Feb 9	+4	Departure	CC16033 Tallahassee Miami-Dade Cty Days
Feb 5	Feb 10	R/T	Arrival	
Feb 17	Feb 19	+2	Departure	CC16-066 Wash DC, NACo conference
Feb 17	Feb 24	R/T	Arrival	

SALLY HEYMAN – District 4

Commissioner Heyman has used the Escort Service 74 times during the time period examined (the most of any commissioner), including 36 Round trips (i.e., only two transits do not appear as part of an apparent round trip). She booked all of her escorts from 1 to 9 days in advance.

Since 2015, all of Heyman’s escorted transits of MIA were for County-related business, however, on occasions appears to have combined work and pleasure trips, such as July 24 - Aug. 11, 2015 (an 18-day trip) and Sept. 29 - Oct. 11, 2015 (a 13-day trip for a conference that ended Oct. 2). Also, the explanation given for a trip from Aug. 27 - Sep 8, 2015 (a 12-day trip), was simply, “Congresswoman Kosmas,” but Congresswoman Suzanne Kosmas of Florida’s 24<sup>th</sup> district served only from 2009-2010. Also noted: A 9-day trip (May 12-21, 2016).

On Aug. 23, 2015, the Protocol office shows an outbound and inbound transit by Heyman, but her office reported that “she did not travel” on that day. The reason for this discrepancy is unknown.

Escort request    Travel date    Advan    Dep/Arr    Explanation

**2014**

Jan 14	Jan 22	+8	Departure	Not asked
Jan 14	Jan 24	R/T	Arrival	
Feb 27	Feb 28	+1	Departure	Not asked
Feb 27	Mar 4	R/T	Arrival	
Mar 20	Mar 25	+5	Departure	Not asked
Mar 20	Mar 27	R/T	Arrival	
Mar 27	Apr 1	+4	Departure	Not asked

Mar 27	Apr 3	--	Not indicated	
Mar 28	Apr 3	R/T	Arrival	Not asked
Mar 31	Apr 3	R/T	Arrival	<i>(Not clear why multiple arrivals shown)</i>
Apr 21	Apr 30	+9	Departure	Not asked
Apr 21	May 5	R/T	Arrival	
Jun 3	Jun 9	+6	Departure	Not asked
Jun 3	Jun 11	R/T	Arrival	
Jul 21	Jul 22	+1	Departure	Not asked
Jul 21	Jul 23	R/T	Arrival	
Aug 6	Aug 7	+1	Departure	Not asked
Aug 6	Aug 16	R/T	Arrival	
Aug 27	Aug 30	+3	Departure	Not asked
Aug 27	Sep 1	R/T	Arrival	
Sep 24	Sep 27	+3	Departure	Not asked
Sep 24	Sep 30	R/T	Arrival	
Oct 9	Oct 15	+6	Departure	Not asked
Oct 9	Oct 18	R/T	Arrival	
Nov 13	Nov 18	+5	Departure	Not asked
Nov 13	Nov 20	R/T	Arrival	
<b>2015</b>				
Jan 16	Jan 20	+4	Departure	CC15045 Charleston; NACo
Jan 16	Jan 23	R/T	Arrival	
Jan 27	Jan 28	+1	Departure	CC15064 Seattle; NACo
Jan 27	Jan 30	R/T	Arrival	
Feb 18	Feb 20	+2	Departure	CC15084 Wash DC; NACO Leg. Conf.
Feb 18	Feb 25	R/T	Arrival	
Mar 2	Mar 3	+1	Departure	CC15085 Talahse; Capitol meetings
Mar 2	Mar 5	R/T	Arrival	
Mar 23	Mar 24	+1	Departure	CC15126 Talahse; FAC Legislative Days Mar 24-27
Mar 23	Mar 27	R/T	Arrival	
Apr 6	Apr 7	+1	Departure	CC15097 Talahse; Dade Cty Days, Lgsltre
Apr 6	Apr 9	R/T	Arrival	

May 14 May 14	May 20 May 26	+6 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15129 Kauai, HI; NACo Reg. Cong May 20-26
Jun 5 Jun 5	Jun 10 Jun 11	+5 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15127 Atlanta; Fulton Cty Jail Initiatives
Jun 4	Jun 16	+12	Departure	CC15128 St. John's Cty FL, FAC Conf & Expo
Jun 30 Jun 30	Jul 2 Jul 14	+2 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC15136 Charlotte NC, NACo; incldes vacation
Jul 20 Jul 20	Jul 24 Aug 11	+4 R/T	Departure Arrival	*Justice & Public Sty, Emerg. Mgmt/personal *Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels
Aug 22 Aug 22	Aug 23 Aug 23	+1 R/T	Departure Arrival	*Commissioner did not travel; Protocol Office shows outbound and inbound transits. *Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels
Aug 25 Aug 25	Aug 27 Sep 8	+2 R/T	Departure Arrival	*Congresswoman Kosmas *Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels **Kosmas was a Representative from 2009-2010
Sep 9 Sep 9	Sep 10 Sep 11	+1 R/T	Departure Arrival	*Natl Assoc Counties (NACo) *Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels
Sep 25 Sep 30	Sep 29 Oct 11	+4 +11-R/T	Departure Arrival	*NACo Large Urban Cnty Caucus *Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels ** Seattle conference was Sept 30-Oct 2 (MIA arrival 9 days later)
Oct 19 Oct 19	Oct 26 Oct 29	+7 R/T	Departure Arrival	*Legislative congressional mtgs *Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels
Nov 2 Nov 2	Nov 3 Nov 8	+1 R/T	Departure Arrival	*Global advisory mtg NACo *Talahase leg. Mtgs, Crim Justice mental health *Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels
Nov 12 Nov 12	Nov 15 Nov 20	+3 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC16065 NYC/Amelia Is/Wash DC conferences
Nov 30 Nov 30	Dec 2 Dec 6	+2 R/T	Departure Arrival	CC16035 Dover, Colo. NACo Safe Counties Symp



Dec 8	Dec 8	0	Not indicated	*Travel cancelled
Dec 8	Dec 9	R/T	Not indicated	
				*Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels
Dec 10	Dec 13	+3	Departure	*NACo Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Dec 10	Dec 15	R/T	Arrival	
				*Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels

**2016**

Feb 2	Feb 7	+5	Departure	*Legislative Session; Dade Days, FACo
Feb 2	Feb 10	R/T	Arrival	
				*Per 6/21/16 E-Mail from Bonnie Michaels
Feb 17	Feb 19	+2	Departure	CC16073 Wash DC; NACo Legislative CONf
Feb 17	Feb 23	R/T	Arrival	
Mar 21	Mar 24	+3	Departure	Not asked
Mar 21	Mar 30	R/T	Arrival	
Apr 11	Apr 17	+6	Departure	Not asked
Apr 11	Apr 19	R/T	Arrival	
May 3	May 12	+9	Departure	Not asked
May 3	May 21	R/T	Arrival	

**BRUNO BARREIRO – District 5**

Commissioner Barreiro is one of only two Commissioners (also Dennis Moss) who did not use the Protocol Office at all during the period observed.

No transits

**REBECA SOSA – District 6**

Commissioner Sosa used the Protocol Office’s escort service 13 times since March 2014, including six (6) apparent round trips. She claimed County reimbursement for expenses for one of those trips March 11-12, 2015). She booked the Protocol Office service between one (1) and nine (9) days prior to her outbound trips.

On March 5, 2015, Sosa also appeared to travel with her daughter Veronica, and both took advantage of the escort service. Sosa’s office described the purpose of this trip as “emergency trip for sick relative,” but it should be noted that the escort service was reserved nine (9) days prior to the outbound flight.

Not listed below: Commissioner Sosa’s sister, Guadalupe Diaz, reserved the Protocol Office Escort service on five occasions, and actually utilized it on three occasions, all in 2016.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
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**2014**

Mar 11	Mar 12	+1	Departure	Not asked
Mar 12	Mar 13	+1 R/T	Arrival	
Jun 16	Jun 17	+1	Departure	Not asked
Jun 16	Jun 18	R/T	Arrival	

**2015**

Feb 24	Mar 5	+9	Departure	*Emergency trip for sick relative
<i>Feb 24</i>	<i>Mar 5</i>	<i>Accom</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Veronica Sosa – Daughter of commissioner</i>
Feb 24	Mar 7	R/T	Arrival	
<i>Feb 24</i>	<i>Mar 7</i>	<i>Accom</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Veronica Sosa – Daughter of commissioner</i>

\*Per 6/10/16 E-mail from Betty Aguirre

Mar 9	Mar 10	+1	Departure	CC15066 Tallahassee; legislative issues
Mar 9	Mar 11	R/T	Arrival	

May 11	May 15	+4	Not indicated	*Emergency trip for death in the family
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\*Per 6/10/16 E-mail from Betty Aguirre

**2016**

Mar 3	Mar 4	+1	Departure	*“Travel while serving under the capacity of a Miami Dade County Elected Official”
Mar 3	Mar 6	R/T	Arrival	

\*Per 6/10/16 E-mail from Betty Aguirre, specifics not provided

May 24	May 26	+2	Not indicated	Not asked
May 24	May 25	+1	Departure	Not asked
May 24	May 26	R/T	Arrival	

Note: Three trips (five requests) for Guadalupe Diaz, sister of Rebeca Sosa)

XAVIER SUAREZ – District 7

Suarez’ office identified his one use of the Protocol escort as related to a personal trip. Suarez later explained that he had not requested the escort, but rather had it offered to him unexpectedly by the

Protocol Office as he prepared to travel privately, so that the office staff could brief him on airport developments.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Not avail	Sep 28	--	Not avail	*Personal trip *Per Ricardo Gonzalez, Suarez chief of staff.

**DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA --- District 8**

Commissioner Levine Cava has used the Protocol Office escort service on six (6) occasions during the time frame examined, including one (1) apparent round-trip. All of these occasions were related to official work except one (1), July 8, 2015, the purpose of which is described as “personal.”

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
<b>2015</b>				
Mar 23	Mar 24	+1	Departure	CC15062 Talahase; Fla Assn Counties Day conf
Mar 24	Mar 26	R/T	Arrival	
Apr 21	Apr 24	+3	Departure	*Travel for Metro Plng Org (MPO) *Per Sean McCrackine 6/17/16 email
Apr 27	Apr 30	+3	Departure	*Travel for policy conference on Local Police *Self-funded by Commissioner, Per Sean McCrackine 6/17/16 email
Jun 16	Jun16	0	Departure	CC15119 Ponte Vedra Bch FACo Annual Conf.
Jun 25	Jul 8	+13	Departure	*Personal travel *Per Sean McCrackine 6/17/16 email

**2016**

Feb 1	Feb 2	+1	Departure	CC16047 Talahase; FACo Leg Day confr.
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**DENNIS MOSS – District 9**

Commissioner Moss is one of two Commissioners (also Bruno Barreiro) who did not use the Protocol Office at all during the period observed.

No transits

**JAVIER SOUTO – District 10**

Commissioner Souto has used the Protocol Office escort service 22 times since January 2014, including 10 apparent round trips. Souto booked his first escort six (6) days in advance, but since then, typically requested the service either the day before or the same day as his planned outbound travel. All of his identified trips were for County business, reflecting his strong interest in cattle breeding shows in the hemisphere.

The Protocol Office also shows an escorted transit for Jose A. Souto on Nov. 12, 2015, listing him as a “sister ports VIP,” but not identifying if he is related to Commissioner Souto.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
<b>2014</b>				
Jan 13	Jan 19	+6	Departure	Not asked
Jan 13	Jan 21	R/T	Arrival	
Oct 15	Oct 16	+1	Arrival	Not asked
Nov 28	Nov 28	0	Departure	Not asked
Dec 16	Dec 16	0-R/T	Arrival	
<b>2015</b>				
Feb 13	Feb 13	0	Departure	CC15039 San Antonio, Amer. Brahman Brdrs
Feb 13	Feb 16	R/T	Arrival	
Mar 3	Mar 3	0	Departure	CC15048 Houston, Amer. Brahman Brdrs Mtg
Mar 6	Mar 6	0-R/T	Arrival	
May 4	May 5	+1	Departure	CC15152 Brazil, Brzilian Cattle Assoc Conf.
May 10	May 10	0-R/T	Arrival	
Jul 7	Jul 8	+1	Departure	CC15152 Bogota, Colombia; Agro Expo
Jul 7	Jul 11	R/T	Arrival	
Sep 23	Sep 23	0	Departure	CC15159 Brazil; Expo Brahman Cattle Show
Sep 23	Sep 29	R/T	Arrival	
Oct 13	Oct 14	+1	Departure	CC 16008 Texas; Amer Brahman Brdrs mtg
Oct 13	Oct 19	R/T	Arrival	
Nov 11	Nov 12	+1	Arrival	<i>Jose A. Souto; sister Ports VIP, Spain (related?)</i>
<b>2016</b>				
Feb 29	Mar 1	+1	Departure	CC16069 Houston; Amer Brahman Brdrs mtg
Feb 29	Mar 4	R/T	Arrival	

Apr 26	Apr 28	+2	Departure	Not asked
Apr 26	May 5	R/T	Arrival	

JUAN ZAPATA – District 11

Commissioner Zapata has used the Protocol Office escort service on 14 occasions since March 2014. Unlike other Commissioners, Zapata customarily books the service only once per trip, either on the outbound or inbound flight; only once did he appear to book the service for both legs of a round trip.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
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**2014**

Mar 11	Mar 11	0	Departure	<i>Jaime &amp; Rosa Zapata (relatives Comm. Zapata)</i>
Apr 24	Apr 25	+1	Departure	Not asked
Apr 25	Apr 25	0-R/T	Arrival	
Jun 6	Jun 7	+1	Arrival	Not asked
Nov 21	Nov 21	0	Arrival	Not asked
Dec 16	Dec 16	0	Departure	Not asked

**2015**

Jan 28	Jan 29	+1	Arrival	* "County work- requested assistance upon his arrival to arrive on time to his speaking engagement at the Greater Kendall Business Association in District 11." *Per Zapata's Special Projects Coordinator Stephanie Cornejo
Feb 19	Feb 19	0	Departure	* "County work- requested assistance related to a flight for his attendance to the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials reception." *Per Zapata's Special Projects Coordinator Stephanie Cornejo
Mar 19	Mar 19	0	Departure	* "County work - requested assistance for his Tallahassee trip back to Miami during the State of Florida session for District 11 projects." *Per Zapata's Special Projects Coordinator Stephanie Cornejo
Mar 26	Mar 29	+3	Arrival	**The Commissioner said that it's possible that the nature of his trip on March 29, 2015 was personal but he does not recall. He can't find the specifics on the trip but he suspects that he was flying in from out of the County and asked for assistance." *Per Zapata's Special Projects Coordinator Stephanie Cornejo

Sep 16	Sep 17	+1	Arrival	* "County work – requested assistance on his flight into Miami so that he could make it on time for the SPAGO Committee Meeting at 3:00 PM and the Budget Hearing at 5:01 PM." *Per Zapata's Special Projects Coordinator Stephanie Cornejo
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**2016**

Apr 12	Apr 12	0	Departure	Not asked
May 12	May 12	0	Departure	Not asked
Jun 1	Jun 1	0	Departure	Not asked
Jun 8	Jun 8	0	Departure	Not asked

**JOSE 'PEPE' DIAZ – District 12**

Commissioner Diaz utilized the escort service of the Protocol Office on 27 occasions, including 13 round trips, during the time period examined. For all of the trips for which explanations were requested, Diaz was traveling on County-related business.

On one occasion, June 20, 2015, Diaz arrived at MIA from an overseas trip with his wife, and both were escorted through the airport by the Protocol Office.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
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**2014**

Jan 6	Jan 8	+2	Departure	Not asked
Jan 6	Jan 9	R/T	Arrival	
Mar 31	Apr 1	+1	Departure	Not asked
Mar 31	Apr 3	R/T	Arrival	
May 1	May 10	+9	Departure	Not asked
May 1	May 16	R/T	Arrival	
Oct 21	Nov. 11	+21	Departure	Not asked
Oct 21	Nov. 19	R/T	Arrival	

**2015**

Mar 12	Mar 17	+5	Departure	CC15077 Talahase, meet with legislators
Mar 12	Mar 18	R/T	Arrival	
Apr 2	Apr 6	+4	Departure	CC15072 Talahse; Dade County Days
Apr 9	Apr 9	0-R/T	Arrival	

May 18	May 19	+1	Departure	CC15106 Wash DC; So Fla Ecosystem Restora.
May 18	May 20	R/T	Arrival	
May 21	Jun 20	+30	Arrival	Return from Paris, Marseille Trade show
May 21	Jun 20	Accom	Arrival	Maria del Carmen Diaz (spouse of commissioner)
*Per 6/20 e-mail from Belkys Romay; Trade show was June 12-20				
Jul 6	Jul 7	+1	Departure	* Invited to attend F-Air Colombia Intl Air Show.
Jul 6	Jul 10	R/T	Arrival	
*Per 6/20 email from Belkys Romay				
Sep 3	Sep 27	+24	Not indicated	CC15161 Panama City. Staff says <u>trip cancelled</u> *
Sep 3	Sep 30	R/T	Not indicated	
*Per 6/20 E-mail from Belkys Romay, trip was scheduled but cancelled.				
<b>2016</b>				
Feb 3	Feb 8	+5	Departure	CC16049 Talahse; Dade County Days
Feb 3	Feb 10	R/T	Arrival	
Feb 17	Apr 11	+56	Departure	China, Taiwan - Diaz led business devel mission*
Feb 17	Apr 24	R/T	Arrival	
*Per 6/20 E-mail from Belkys Romay				
Apr 4	Apr 6	+2	Departure	Not asked
Apr 4	Apr 7	R/T	Arrival	
Apr 18	Apr 24	+6	Departure	Not asked
Jun 23	Jun 26	+3	Departure	Not asked
Jun 23	Jun 28	R/T	Arrival	

#### ESTEBAN BOVO – District 13

Commissioner Bovo has used the Protocol Office escort service on six (6) occasions during the time period considered, including two round trips. All of the trips fell outside of the initial time frame for which explanations of the Commissioners' travel were requested.

On two occasions, Bovo traveled with (and utilized the escort service with) his wife Viviana. On another occasion (May 23, 2016) Viviana Bovo traveled on her own as a "staff member of Sen. Rubio." Viviana Bovo has worked for Rubio since at least 2011.

The Protocol Office provided Commissioner Bovo and four (4) unnamed others with an escorted transit through MIA on July 1, 2014. On Oct. 3, 2014, Bovo and one (1) unnamed other were escorted through the airport.

Escort request   Travel date   Advan   Dep/Arr   Explanation

**2014**

Mar 28	Mar 30	+2	Arrival	Not asked
<i>Mar 28</i>	<i>Mar 30</i>	<i>Accom</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Viviana Bovo (Spouse of commissioner)</i>

May 23	May 24	+1	Departure	Not asked
May 23	May 24	Accom	Departure	<i>Viviana Bovo (Spouse of commissioner)</i>
May 23	Jun 1	R/T	Arrival	<i>(Commissioner only?)</i>

Jul 1	Jul 1	0	Departure	Not asked; <i>traveled with four others</i>
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Oct 3	Oct 3	0	Departure	Not asked; <i>traveled with one other</i>
Oct 3	Oct 4	R/T	Arrival	<i>Traveled with one other</i>

**2016**

<i>May 23</i>	<i>May 31</i>	<i>+8</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Traveler: Viviana Bovo, staff of Sen Rubio</i>
<i>May 23</i>	<i>Jun 2</i>	<i>R/T</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Traveler: Viviana Bovo, staff of Sen Rubio</i>



### APPENDIX 3

#### Mayors

TOMAS REGALADO, Miami

Mayor Regalado utilized the escort service of the Protocol Office on 48 occasions since May 2010. During the identified time period, all trips were for an identified public purpose.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
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#### 2010

May 20	May 21	+1	Departure	Not asked
May 20	May 21	R/T	Arrival	

Jun 7	Jun 14	+7	Departure	Not asked
Jun 7	Jun 20	R/T	Arrival	
<i>Jun 7</i>	<i>Jun 14</i>	<i>+7</i>	<i>Departure</i>	
<i>Jun 7</i>	<i>Jun 20</i>	<i>R/T</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	

*Jose Francisco Regalado (son of the Mayor)*

Jul 14	Jul 15	+1	Departure
Jul 14	Jul 15	R/T	Arrival

#### 2011

Mar 15	Mar 16	+1	Departure	Not asked
Mar 15	Mar 17	R/T	Arrival	

May 25	May 26	+1	Departure	Not asked
May 25	Jun 2	R/T	Arrival	
<i>May 25</i>	<i>May 26</i>	<i>+1</i>	<i>Departure</i>	
<i>May 25</i>	<i>Jun 2</i>	<i>R/T</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	

*Raquel Regalado (daughter of mayor, school bd member) (traveled together?)*

Jun 14	Jun 15	+1	Arrival	Not asked
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Nov 26	Nov 26	0	Arrival	Not asked
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Nov 29	Nov 30	+1	Departure	Not asked
Nov 29	Dec. 4	R/T	Arrival	

Dec 12	Dec 13	+1	Departure	Not asked
Dec 12	Dec 13	R/T	Arrival	

#### 2012

Mar 16	Mar 20	+4	Departure	Not asked
Mar 16	Mar 23	R/T	Arrival	
May 7	May 8	+1	Departure	Not asked
May 7	May 9	R/T		
May 17	May 19	+2	Departure	Not asked
May 17	May 26	R/T	Arrival	
Aug 6	Aug 7	+ 1	Departure	Not asked
Aug 6	Aug. 12	R/T	Arrival	

**2013**

Feb. 25	Feb 26	+1	Departure	Not asked
Feb 25	Feb 27	R/T	Arrival	
Apr 5	Apr 8	+3	Departure	Not asked
Apr 5	Apr 14	R/T	Arrival	
Jul 1	Jul 1	0	Departure	Not asked
Jul 1	Jul 7	(arrival – requested July 1)		

**2014**

Jan 24	Jan 30	+6	Departure	*Merida, Mexico, re: Sister City Agreement
Jan 24	Feb 3	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per Mayor		
Jun 18	Jun 20	+2	Departure	*Madrid, Spain, re: Sister City Agreement
		<i>Traveled with five (5) others</i>		
Jun 18	Jun 29	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per Mayor		
Sep 24	Sep 28	+4	Departure	*San Juan, P.R., CAMACOL & biz symposium
		<i>Traveled with four (4) others</i>		
Sep 24	Oct 1	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per Mayor		
Nov 5	Nov 6	+1	Departure	*Curacao/Miami Police Dept. Training Agmt
Nov 5	Nov 6	<i>Accom</i>	<i>Departure</i>	
		<i>Traveled w/ Raquel Regalado, daughter of mayor, school board member</i>		
Nov 5	Nov 8	R/T	Arrival	
Nov 5	Nov 8	R/T	Arrival	
		<i>Traveled w/ Raquel Regalado, daughter of mayor, School Board member</i>		
		*Per Mayor		

**2015**

Jun 8	Jun 9	+1	Departure	*Montreal "Living Together" Global Symposium
Jun 8	Jun 12	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per Mayor		
Sep 24	Sep 26	+2	Departure	*Panama City CAMACOL & biz symposium
Sep 24	Sep 30	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per Mayor		
Oct 6	Oct 11	+5	Departure	*Madrid, Spain, re: Sister City Agreement
Oct 6	Oct 18	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per Mayor		
Nov 4	Nov 11	+7	Departure	*Kagoshima, Japan re: Sister City Agreement
Nov 4	Nov 15	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per Mayor		

**2016**

Apr 27	May 2	+5	Departure	*Buenos Aires, Re: Sister City Agreement, biz
Apr 27	May 7	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per Mayor		

**CARLOS GIMENEZ**

Mayor Gimenez used the Protocol Office escort service 12 times during the time period examined. All of the trips were for an identified public purpose.

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
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**2012**

Apr 20	Apr 23	+3	Departure	* Port-au-Prince Haiti w/Monestime
		*Per chief of staff Alex Ferro		
Nov 26	Nov 26*	0	No travel*	*Airport meeting w/ Fla Sec of State Detzner
		*Per chief of staff Alex Ferro		

**2013**

Feb 25	Feb 26	+1	Departure	*Wash DC to meet with congressional reps
Feb 26	Feb 27	+1-R/T	Arrival	
		*Per chief of staff Alex Ferro		
Apr 10	Apr 10	0	Departure	*Tallahassee to meet w/state leg reps
		<i>Traveled with one (1) other – unidentified</i>		
		*Per chief of staff Alex Ferro		

Apr 8	Jun 9	+62	Departure	*Spain and France, biz development mtgs
May 23	Jun 28	+36-R/T	Arrival	
		*Per chief of staff Alex Ferro		

**2014**

Mar 12	Mar 12	0	Departure	*Talahase Present Leg. Issues @ State legis.
Mar 12	Mar 13	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per chief of staff Alex Ferro		

Apr 7	Apr 7	0	Departure	* Talahase Present Leg. Issues @ State legis.
Apr 7	Apr 9	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per chief of staff Alex Ferro		

Oct 21	Oct 22	+1	Arrival	*Austin, TX econ develop; mtg with Dell execs
		*Per chief of staff Alex Ferro		

**CARLOS HERNANDEZ**

Hialeah Mayor Carlos Hernandez utilized the Protocol Office escort service 26 times since June 2013. This number includes an estimated nine (9) round trips.

In response to this office’s public records request, the Hialeah City Clerk explained that the mayor pays for all city-related travel through his salary and doesn’t submit travel expense records. Therefore, the investigator asked for copies of the mayor’s calendar for the days of travel noted by the Protocol Office. The Mayor’s staff declined to elaborate on discrepancies or gaps in his calendar record.

On seven (7) occasions, including four (4) apparent round trips, the calendar made no reference at all to any public business. Among these is July 11 and July 21, 2014; when records show the mayor was accompanied by his wife, who also benefited from the Protocol escort. Data suggests a 10-day trip out of town with his wife. The mayor’s calendar note says only, “Block per mayor.”

<u>Escort request</u>	<u>Travel date</u>	<u>Advan</u>	<u>Dep/Arr</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
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**2013**

Jun 19			Not asked	
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**2014**

Feb 18	Feb 19	+1	Departure	* Talahse; meet with gov, Fla Urban ptrnshp
Feb 18	Feb 20	R/T	Arrival	
		* Per calendar		

Mar 11	Mar 13	+2	Departure	* Wash D.C.; Mayors in Education/Gates Fndn
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Mar 11 *Per calendar	Mar 14	R/T	Not indicated	
Mar 25	Mar 26	+1	Departure business.	* "Mayor out of town." No mention of public
		*Per calendar		
Mar 26 League of Cities dinner.	Apr 1	+5	Departure	* Talahse Dade Days, meet w/ Gov. Scott., Fla
Apr 3	Apr 3	0-R/T	Arrival	Trip planned since Feb. 5, 2014
		*Per calendar		
Jul 10	Jul 11	+1	Departure	* Traveled w/ wife Nancy; No mention of
			public business.	
Jul 10	Jul 21	R/T	Arrival	
Sep 8	Sep 9	+1		* Wash D.C. "Fla League of Cities Fly-In."
Sep 8 (?)	Sep 10	R/T	Arrival (?)	
*Per calendar				
(?) Detailed entry missing				
Oct 21	Oct 24	+3	Departure	*No mention of public business.
Hialeah Councilman Paul Hernandez, who booked escort on 10/15 also traveled.				
		*Per calendar		

**2015**

Jan 21	Jan 22	+1	Departure	* Wash D.C., U.S. Conf Mayors Plenary Session
Jan 21	Jan 23	R/T	Arrival	
Feb 13	Feb 16	+3	Departure	*Tallahassee... purpose unspecified
		*Per calendar		
Mar 17	Mar 18	+1	Departure	* Los Angeles, Mayor's Institute on City Design.
			Trip planned as early as Jan. 28. Event ran through March 20.	
		*Per calendar		
Mar 24	Mar 25	+1	Departure	* "Mayor out of town;" No mention of public
			business.	
		*Per calendar		
Apr 6	Apr 7	+1	Not indicated	* Pig Roast, Dade Days, Talahase
		*Per calendar		
Sep 3	Sep 4	+1	Departure	* No mention of public business.
Sep 3	Sep 6	R/T	Not indicated	
Sep 4	Sep 7	R/T	Arrival	
		*Per calendar		

Nov 10	Nov 12	+2	Departure	No calendar copy provided
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**2016**

Feb 1	Feb 8	+7	*Dade Days, Tallahassee; Taste of Hialeah Pig Roast	
Feb 1	Feb 10	R/T		

\*Per calendar

Mar 21	Mar 23 `	+2	*“Mayor out of town.” No mention of public business.	
Mar 21	Mar 26	R/T		

Jul 20	Jul 22	+2	Not asked	
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