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*The Ethics Commission was created in 1996 as an independent agency with advisory and quasi-judicial powers. It is composed of five members, serving staggered terms of four years each. Through a program of training, outreach and enforcement, the Commission seeks to bolster public trust.*

## Summary of the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust Meeting Held on December 11, 2019

The Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust took the following actions at its monthly public meeting held on December 11, 2019.

### **Ethics Commission appoints a new Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Ethics Commission elected Vice-Chair Nelson C. Bellido as the new Chair of the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust. Commissioner Judith Bernier was elected and will now serve as the Vice-Chair. Chairman Bellido, replaces the late Jeffrey Cutler who served as chairman from 2017 until his unexpected passing this past September.

### **Executive Director of Social Sciences at Miami-Dade County Public Schools Recognized**

Bob Brazofsky, Executive Director of Social Sciences, for Miami-Dade County Public Schools, was recognized for his decade-long service in support of thousands of students that have participated in Ethical Governance Day, a yearly event emphasizing youth civic engagement.

### **Ethics Commission Adopts “Bright-Line Rule” Opinion Regarding Voting Conflicts for Elected City and County Officials**

**ROO 19-04:** The Ethics Commission issued a formal opinion specifying the voting conflict section of the County Ethics Code imposes an automatic prohibition on an elected official’s vote or participation on a matter if he or she holds a primary position with an entity that might be affected by vote. The full opinion can be found at the Ethics Commission website.

### **Ethics Commission Adopts Resolution Opposing the Passage of Legislation Preempting Local Government Lobbyist Ethics Training Requirements**

The Ethics Commission adopted a resolution opposing Florida House Bill 611 and Florida Senate Bill 766, and other similar legislation, that would preempt local ordinances requiring local lobbyists to receive training in ethics, conflict of interest, and public meeting and records law.

### **Report Presented Detailing the Practice of Elected Officials Soliciting Private Donations**

**PI 18-44:** Ethics Commission staff presented an investigative report regarding the practice of elected officials soliciting funds from private individuals or businesses to pay for community events. The Ethics Commission gave staff the go-ahead to present a proposed opinion that would limit this practice. The investigative report and accompanying ethics opinion (**INQ 19-124**) are available on the Ethics Commission website.

### **Ethics Commission Rejects Motion to Deny Admissibility of Evidence in Case Involving State Representative Michael Grieco**

**C18-17-04:** The Ethics Commission denied a motion by the defense to exclude two newspaper articles as potential evidence in a case involving State Representative Michael Grieco. A status hearing is to be scheduled at the January Ethics Commission meeting to determine when to proceed with the Public Hearing on the case.

### **Lobbyist Rafael Garcia-Toledo Stipulates to Unregistered Lobbying Finding**

**C19-42-10:** Lobbyist Rafael Garcia-Toledo stipulated to a Probable Cause that he engaged in unregistered lobbying of Miami-Dade County Commissioner Audrey Edmonson and agreed to pay \$500.00 in investigative costs.