

PETITION TO MOVE BISCAYNE ISLAND FROM THE CITY OF MIAMI TO THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH

FROM: Residents of Biscayne Island, City of Miami

TO: City of Miami Beach, City of Miami and Miami-Dade County

We, the undersigned, are owners of property located on Biscayne Island on the Venetian Causeway and hereby formally request a change in municipal boundaries to move Biscayne Island from the City of Miami to the City of Miami Beach. Signatures to this request are incorporated herein by reference and are annexed as Exhibit A.

As the City of Miami's downtown grows at unprecedented levels, it is clear that the public and private development on the Miami side of the Venetian Islands is largely ignored, and the safety and welfare of the Biscayne Island residents have been severely and negatively impacted. There is an arbitrary divide in what should be one community. Residents of Biscayne Island pay proportionally more in real estate taxes than residents of Miami Beach on the Venetian Islands. Notwithstanding the higher tax rate, Biscayne Island residents arbitrarily suffer from:

1. No Children Community Center: Children that reside on Biscayne Island benefit from living in a Miami Beach school district and have access to the Scott Rakow Recreation Center. Because our properties, however, are technically located in the City of Miami, we suffer from non-priority registration (at "non-resident" rates). Our children are therefore often shut out from participating in after-school activities with their classmates. There is not a facility in the City of Miami as easily accessible as the Scott Rakow Recreation Center that offers after-school activities. This causes significant hardships on our children and families.

2. Inferior Security & Emergency Response Time: Crimes occur on this small island on a regular basis. The absence of a 24/7 officer places us in danger and leaves Biscayne Island residents especially vulnerable when the Western Bascule is raised. We share services with District 2, in heavily-populated downtown Miami (including the American Airlines Arena), and there are simply not enough officers to adequately cover Biscayne Island. Residents should not have to call 911 and wait over 45 minutes for an officer when there is an intruder on their property. It is common to have to wait two hours or more for a police officer when a non-emergency call is placed. Residents should also not be told by a Miami Beach police officer when approached with a problem that "it is not [their] jurisdiction," which only worsens the tensions. It also has been made clear to Biscayne Island residents by City of Miami Officials that we do not benefit from the Venetian Causeway or City of Miami budget; we have been informed that the simple provision for two (2) License Plate Readers for western entrance of the Venetian Causeway is too expensive at an approximate aggregate cost of \$20,000 (4 of which were already installed on the Miami Beach side and paid for by the Miami Beach Police Department).

3. Inferior Zoning, Infrastructure and Pervasive and Egregious Oversight: Biscayne Island is zoned as "T3 Urban Residential" – an inappropriate zone for multi-million dollar, single-family homes on small lots. Setbacks for our zone are the same as those in highly-urban Miami areas. Setbacks and greenspace requirements on Biscayne Island should not be different than those on the Miami Beach islands of the Venetian Causeway. Further, there is an overwhelming amount of evidence that the City of Miami Building Department selectively (if ever) enforces zoning. Variances are almost invariably rubber-stamped, irrespective of their impact on the neighboring property owners. Corrections to infractions are not mandated by the City of Miami, including pursuant to Chapter 17A of the Municipal Code. Empty lots on the Miami Venetian islands are grossly neglected – the half-built, abandoned structures on these lots are nuisances, attractive not only to children, but vagrants too and require attention by the City of Miami's understaffed police department. More importantly, the City of Miami does not devote enough resources to monitor ongoing construction and the influx of hundreds of constructions workers who often times disrespect us and our property.

Biscayne Island residents should benefit from buried electrical lines that Miami Beach islands are enjoying and/or are in the process of procuring. Biscayne Island residents should enjoy green turf bike

lanes for the safety of tourists and residents alike that Miami Beach islands on the Venetian Causeway will soon receive. A draw to the Venetian Causeway is its beauty, walkability and bike path. It is inequitable and insulting to those of us on the "Miami side" that we cannot enjoy similar benefits.

4. Increased Miami Beach Parking Expenses: Biscayne Island residents are charged 400% more than Miami Beach residents: \$4 per hour instead of \$1 per hour (yet Miami Beach Sunset Island residents are entitled to use the Venetian Causeway at the highly discounted resident commuter pass rate). There is no quid pro quo.

5. Lack of Input in Miami Beach Government Affairs: The laws that most affect us on a daily basis are voted on in Miami Beach, and we have no input. With a change to the Miami Beach jurisdiction, we will have both taxation *and* representation.