

## **Restore the County's Independent Review Panel**

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- Deferred by the Issues Committee 5/23/2017
  - Presented for consideration to the Steering Committee 5/25/2017
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**WHEREAS**, in 1980, in the wake of the McDuffie race riots following the acquittal of four Miami-Dade Police Officers in the death of African-American Arthur McDuffie, the Miami-Dade County Commission created the Independent Review Panel (IRP); and

**WHEREAS**, For nearly thirty years, the IRP provided a source of procedural justice by receiving complaints against police officers, reviewing the disciplinary actions taken by internal-affairs investigators, issuing reports and recommendations for further action as well as complaints or grievances made against a county employee; and

**WHEREAS**, its actions were public, and neither the police department nor the county controlled the Miami-Dade Independent Review Panel; it operated as a completely separate entity; and

**WHEREAS**, the Miami-Dade County Commission completely defunded the IRP in 2009 during the Great Recession; and

**WHEREAS**, the IRP still exists in county code under section 2-11.41 through 2-11.52 giving this panel full authority to continue doing its work; and

**WHEREAS**, in March of 2008, Commissioner Barbara Jordan tried but failed to give the IRP subpoena powers and hold evidentiary hearings; and

**WHEREAS**, Mayor Gimenez has refused to fund the IRP even though we have economically recovered from the Great Recession of 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, the IRP used to operate a budget of over half a million dollars with 5 full-time staff members to conduct its business and was independent; and

**WHEREAS**, Commissioner Barbara Jordan attempted to renew the IRP, but did not find support on the County Commission so she instead created an IRP working group to make recommendations on restoring the IRP; and

**WHEREAS**, the IRP working group's report will be presented at the next County Commission meeting on Tuesday, June 6, 2017; and

**WHEREAS**, a fully funded and fully operational IRP could have been instrumental in helping Darren Rainey's family find justice by questioning the Medical Examiner's report and Police report; and

**WHEREAS**, the budget cycle for the County Commission will be coming up soon;

**WHEREAS**, a fully functioning and fully funded IRP with full investigative powers is critical to restore trust between the community and law enforcement; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Miami-Dade Democratic Executive Committee urges the Mayor and the County Commission to fully restore the Independent Review Panel in this upcoming budget cycle and appoint members to the panel immediately; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Miami-Dade Democratic Executive Committee urges the County Commission to create a permanent funding stream, through ordinance or charter amendment, for the IRP by allocating at least 0.2% of the Police Department's budget to the IRP; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Miami-Dade Democratic Executive Committee urges the County Commission to adopt Commissioner Jordan's 2008 proposal to give the IRP the power of subpoena and power to hold evidentiary hearings; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Miami-Dade Democratic Executive Committee will create an IRP working group to mobilize a community campaign to inform voters of this situation.