

Dr. Marta Pérez, Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 99-45 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING BUCKLE UP AMERICA'S PRESIDENTIAL SEAT BELT INITIATIVE AND THE GOALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION TO MAKE OPERATING A VEHICLE WHILE UNRESTRAINED BY A SEAT BELT, OR WHILE HAVING UNRESTRAINED PASSENGERS, A PRIMARY OFFENSE**

According to Buckle Up America's First Report to Congress (BUAFRC), someone in America is injured in a traffic accident every 14 seconds and killed every 12 minutes. The report also states that these numbers are higher for Hispanics and African-Americans, a fact that is of great consequence to Miami-Dade County. Motor vehicle accidents are a leading cause of death among Hispanics through age 24 and the second leading cause of death for ages 24-44. Vehicular accidents are the leading cause of death for blacks through age 14 and the second leading cause of death for ages 15-25. (Monthly Vital Statistics Report for 1995, CDC, 1997)

Seat belts save lives! Properly worn seat belts save an estimated 9,500 lives a year and decrease the chances of fatality or serious injury to front passengers by 45 to 50 percent. (BUAFRC, page 5) These statistics led to Buckle Up America's *Presidential Initiative For Increasing Seat Belt Use Nationwide*. A major thrust of this plan is to have each state "enact strong legislation and embrace active, high visibility law enforcement." (BUAFRC, page 4)

To increase the safety of Miami-Dade County children and to prevent unnecessary tragedies such as the fatal September 8 accident that took the lives of three students, it is proposed that The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, pass Resolution 99-45 supporting the efforts of Buckle Up America's Presidential Seat Belt Initiative and the goals of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
DR. MARTA PÉREZ:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida approve Resolution No. 99-45 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, supporting the efforts of Buckle Up America's Presidential Seat Belt Initiative and the goals of the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to make operating a vehicle while unrestrained by a seat belt, or while having unrestrained passengers, a primary offense.

MP:jm

**REPLACEMENT**

**B-4**

RESOLUTION NO. 99-45 OF THE  
SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SUPPORTING THE EFFORTS OF BUCKLE UP AMERICA'S PRESIDENTIAL SEAT  
BELT INITIATIVE AND THE GOALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION'S NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRA-  
TION TO MAKE OPERATING A VEHICLE WHILE UNRESTRAINED BY A SEAT  
BELT, OR WHILE HAVING UNRESTRAINED PASSENGERS, A PRIMARY OFFENSE

**WHEREAS**, Miami-Dade County Public Schools is committed to teaching traffic safety, thereby reducing the number of people (40,000), including children, who are injured or killed in traffic accidents each year; and

**WHEREAS**, the first line of defense against traffic injuries and fatalities is to stay buckled up; and

**WHEREAS**, the vast majority of our population expresses positive attitudes about seat belt usage; and

**WHEREAS**, Miami-Dade County Public Schools can be a catalyst in helping America reach its potential of saving lives and preventing injuries through the use of seat belts; and

**WHEREAS**, experience has shown that state seat belt laws and the enforcement of them significantly increase seat belt and child safety seat use;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 99-45 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, supporting the efforts of Buckle Up America's Presidential Seat Belt Initiative and the goals of the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to make operating a vehicle while unrestrained by a seat belt, or while having unrestrained passengers, a primary offense.

A copy of this resolution is placed in the permanent records of this Board.

Presented this twentieth day of October, A.D. 1999

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

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CHAIR

ATTEST:

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Secretary