

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT: COMMEMORATION OF THE 104TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
INDEPENDENCE OF CUBA – MAY 20, 2006**

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

The struggle for Cuban independence concluded on May 20, 1902, after a long and courageous battle against Spain and a brief occupation by the United States following the Spanish-American War in 1898. Throughout the late 1800s, Cuban patriots, including Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Antonio Maceo, Máximo Gómez, Calixto García, Tomás Estrada Palma and José Martí, fought for Cuban independence from Spain's colonial rule.

Martí, the most well known voice for Cuban independence, organized the Cuban Revolutionary Party. He, along with several other patriots, garnered support for the cause from around the island colony and throughout Latin America, the U.S. and Europe. Martí paid the ultimate price for freedom with his life during a battle against Spanish troops at Dos Ríos, Cuba on May 19, 1895 — seven years and one day before Cuba achieved independence.

In commemorating the 104th anniversary of Cuban Independence, we also celebrate Cuban culture and the strong historical ties between Cuba and the United States. Following the Spanish-American War, the United States assisted Cuban nationals in their efforts to develop a strong and independent country. The U.S. contributed to Cuba's economic recovery and to the restructuring of Cuba's judicial and educational systems. Since 1959, the United States has offered refuge and protection to Cuban patriots and has promoted the preservation of democratic values and principles in the island nation.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools also is proud of its efforts to support the Cuban American community. Through strong instructional and support programs, Cuban-Americans and all members of our community have the opportunity to reach their educational and professional potential. As we approach the 104th anniversary of Cuban independence, Miami-Dade County Public Schools honors the Cuban-American community and extends hope that freedom and democracy soon will be a reality for Cuba and its people.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

VICE CHAIR PERLA TABARES HANTMAN: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, joins the Cuban-American community as it commemorates May 20, 2006, as the 104th anniversary of the Independence of Cuba.