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## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **The City of Miami Beach Strengthens Its Stance on Bullying**

*— Amending and Expanding Upon Anti-Bullying Policies —*

**Miami Beach, FL** – Bullying and discrimination have long been the subject of local, state and national concern, specifically pertaining to school yards and private businesses. Committed to limiting their societal harm on the community, the City of Miami Beach has been proactive in passing policy and programs such as No Place for Hate and Safe Space. Now, the City of Miami Beach is expanding this focus by extending its reach to helping and preventing victims of the vile act.

This week, the Miami Beach City Commission unanimously passed a resolution amending the existing anti-bullying policies to reflect the need to protect individuals of the protect classes set forth in the City’s Human Right Ordinance including ancestry, height, weight, domestic partner status, race and more.

“Through our current initiatives, we’ve sent a clear message that bullying is unacceptable within our schools and throughout our City,” shared Commissioner John Elizabeth Alemán. “What we’ve done today is promise to put our full effort to prevent, protect and appropriately respond to these incidents quickly and accurately. We’re reiterating to our residents, youth, visitors and all individuals that there’s zero tolerance for this behavior in our home and under our roof.”

The amendment applies to anti-bullying policies and laws pertaining to City services, supported-services, facilities and now City-sponsored functions. Specific amendments to these policies include a new procedure for reporting bullying or retaliation, a call for more prompt investigations after a report is made and an original appeal process.

“These kinds of behaviors create a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the physical and psychological well-being of its victims, depriving individuals of the ability to achieve their fullest potential whether that is working in or enjoying our City facilities,” shared Commissioner Michael Góngora. “By bringing in the recommendations from our LGBTQ Advisory Committee and Ad Hoc Anti-Bullying Task Force, we’re being more thorough and direct with our policy -- creating a safer place in every corner of our City.”

The decision comes in view of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Miami Beach Gay Pride and in light of the United Nations Anti-Bullying Day on May 4.

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