CITY OF CORAL GABLES

--MEMORANDUM--

The City Beautiful

TO: City Commission, City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk

FROM: Commissioner Melissa Castro

DATE: January 29, 2026

SUBJECT: Documentation of Repeated Mischaracterization and Improper Attribution Regarding Live Local Advocacy

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This memorandum is submitted to formally document and preserve the record regarding repeated mischaracterizations of my conduct and role in housing advocacy related to the State of Florida's Live Local Act, including improper attribution of local legislative activity to the Florida League of Cities.

Background and Facts

On November 18, 2025 I introduced a resolution (Item F3) before the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables urging the State Legislature to consider allowing municipal-based income calculations in large counties for purposes of the Live Local Act. That resolution was debated publicly and did not pass. It never became City policy and was never advanced beyond a Commission vote.

Despite the resolution's failure, a January 27, 2026 letter transmitted by the Mayor to the Florida League of Cities characterized this matter as "legislation sponsored by Commissioner Castro" and implied that such advocacy conflicted with, or was undertaken through, the League's policy framework.

This characterization was inaccurate and materially misleading. The resolution referenced was a local legislative proposal that failed and had no legal or policy effect. At no time was it advanced through, endorsed by, or presented as a position of the Florida League of Cities.

Florida League of Cities Clarification

In response to the Mayor's correspondence, the Florida League of Cities issued a written clarification confirming that:

1. The League never discussed, adopted, supported, or advanced any policy related to adjusting income calculations under the Live Local Act.

2. My participation within the League was limited to service on a member-driven committee addressing general housing policy and the protection of municipal home rule.

3. The League was unaware of any League-sponsored advocacy corresponding to the claims raised in the Mayor's letter.

The League further confirmed that no such advocacy was undertaken through its established policy development process.

Pattern of Mischaracterization and Impact
This correspondence reflects a broader and ongoing pattern in which my actions as a Commissioner are publicly mischaracterized, improperly attributed to external organizations, or framed in a manner that suggests misconduct or conflict where none exists.

The transmission of inaccurate claims to third-party institutions, particularly statewide organizations with which I serve in an official capacity has the effect of undermining professional reputation, interfering with external service, and creating false impressions regarding ethics, authority, and intent.

While disagreement on policy is a normal and expected aspect of public service, the attribution of failed local proposals to external entities, after the fact and without factual basis, exceeds legitimate policy debate and raises concerns regarding harassment and reputational harm.

Purpose of Memorandum
This memorandum is submitted to ensure that the City of Coral Gables maintains a complete and accurate institutional record reflecting:

- That the referenced resolution was not adopted and had no effect;

- That no advocacy was undertaken on behalf of, or through, the Florida League of Cities; and

- That formal clarification was required to correct inaccurate representations made to third parties.

This documentation is preserved for the record should continued mischaracterizations necessitate further administrative, ethical, or legal review.