

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: City Attorney Ricardo J. Dopico

DATE: November 20, 2024 9:45 a.m. Second Reading Public Hearing

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 70, ENTITLED "MISCELLANEOUS OFFENSES"; ARTICLE I, ENTITLED "IN GENERAL"; SECTION 70-8, ENTITLED "APPROACHING A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, AFTER WARNING, WITH INTENT TO IMPEDE, PROVOKE OR HARASS" TO PROVIDE PROTECTION FOR MORE CITY FIRST RESPONDERS AND BRING LANGUAGE INTO COMPLIANCE WITH SEC. 843.21, FLA. STAT.; AND PROVIDING FOR REPEALER, SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

RECOMMENDATION

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

ANALYSIS

The proposed Ordinance was approved on first reading. No changes have been made between first and second reading.

On April 12, 2024, Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law Senate Bill 184 (SB 184), which created Sec. 843.21, Fla. Stat., and provided, effective January 1, 2025, that an individual who approaches a limited list of first responders, with specified intent, is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree.

City of Miami Beach first responders, which include law enforcement officers, detention officers, firefighters, emergency medical providers, parking enforcement specialists, code compliance officers, and park rangers, serve a critical and essential role in keeping our community safe and should be protected similarly to the list of first responders provided in Sec. 843.21, Fla. Stat.

The work of the City's first responders is of great importance and, as such, there exists a need to maintain and improve the safety, security and working conditions of these officers and those they seek to protect.

The City's first responders, while engaged in the lawful performance of their legal duties, continue to encounter individuals who, after receiving warnings not to do so, violate such warnings and approach or remain within close proximity of the first responder(s), with no regard for the first responders' personal safety and no consideration for the first responders' responsibility to maintain public safety, order and social peace.

Certain individuals who fail to heed such warnings not to approach a first responders in the lawful performance of a legal duty, occasionally intend to provoke a physical response from first responders, hinder first responders' performance of their legal duties or incite the crowd surrounding such first responders.

Threats to the life and safety of first responders and the protection of the right to life, liberty and security of the persons in the surrounding area (and potentially, any arrestee) must be seen as imperative to the stability of society as a whole.

By extending the protections offered in new Sec. 843.21, Fla. Stat., to law enforcement officers, detention officers, firefighters, emergency medical providers, parking enforcement specialists, code compliance officers, and park rangers, this proposed Ordinance will advance the important public safety goals of the City and protect the well-being of our dedicated first responders.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate? Yes
(FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

If applicable, the Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on: 10/11/2024
See BIE at: <https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notice/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CONCLUSION

Applicable Area

Citywide

Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?

No

Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?

No

Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481, includes a principal engaged in lobbying? No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s):

Department

City Attorney

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner David Suarez

Co-sponsor(s)

Commissioner Joseph Magazine
Commissioner Alex Fernandez

Condensed Title

9:45 a.m. 2nd Rdg, Approaching First Responder with Specified Intent.
(Suarez/Magazine/Fernandez) CA