

R9 A REFERRAL TO THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE COMMITTEE (FERC) FOR THE CREATION OF A UTILITY COST RELIEF PROGRAM TO INCENTIVIZE LANDLORDS TO ABSORB INCREASED UTILITY FEES, PROTECTING LOW-INCOME TENANTS AND SUPPORTING HOMESTEAD PROPERTY OWNERS AMID RISING UTILITY RATES.

Applicable Area:

# MIAMI BEACH

## COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Commissioner Alex Fernandez

DATE: September 25, 2024

TITLE: REFERRAL TO THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE COMMITTEE (FERC) FOR THE CREATION OF A UTILITY COST RELIEF PROGRAM TO INCENTIVIZE LANDLORDS TO ABSORB INCREASED UTILITY FEES, PROTECTING LOW-INCOME TENANTS AND SUPPORTING HOMESTEAD PROPERTY OWNERS AMID RISING UTILITY RATES.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Please place on the September 25, 2024, Budget Meeting agenda a referral to the Finance and Economic Resilience Committee (FERC) to discuss the creation of a program designed to incentivize landlords to refrain from passing increased utility fees onto tenants, particularly those who are on a fixed income.

Beginning October 1, 2024, the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department is decreasing wholesale sewer rates by \$0.1320 or – 3.35% and increasing wholesale water rates by \$0.2873 or 13.6%. The adjusted pass-through charges will be reflected in City of Miami Beach resident bills during Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

As we know, rising utility costs can place a significant burden on low-income residents, especially seniors and others living on fixed incomes. By providing financial incentives or tax breaks to landlords who absorb these costs rather than transferring them to tenants, we can help protect vulnerable members of our community from extra financial burden.

Additionally, I recommend that FERC explore a support program for homesteaded property owners to help them manage these increased utility costs and maintain their homes.

### **BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

### **ANALYSIS**

### **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

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

**If applicable, the Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on:**

See BIE at: <https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notices/>

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**CONCLUSION**

**Applicable Area**

Citywide

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

Yes

**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**

Office of Commissioner Alex Fernandez

**Sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Alex Fernandez

**Co-sponsor(s)**

**Condensed Title**

Ref: FERC - Proposal for Utility Cost Relief Program for Tenants & Property Owners.  
(Fernandez)