

**Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart
Statement on H.R.3175
A Bill to Convey land to Miami-Dade County
September 15, 2009**

Madam Speaker, I want to thank Ranking Member Lucas for the time.

I rise to urge passage of H.R.3175, a bill I introduced that will direct the Secretary of Agriculture to sell approximately 2 acres of land to Miami-Dade County for the purpose of building a fire station.

Madam Speaker, the southern portion of my district, covering the Village of Palmetto Bay and the City of Pinecrest, continues to grow rapidly. Due to the population growth, public services have been stretched and fire response times have fallen below the fire district-wide average.

Earlier this morning, I met with Edward Silva and Olga Cadaval from the Village of Palmetto Bay. They reiterated to me the urgent need for this fire station for our South Miami-Dade community.

The underlying problem with new construction for public services in Miami-Dade is a lack of available land. The USDA Station in Miami-Dade County currently occupies 200 acres in Southeast Florida with land to spare.

Madam Speaker, the citizens of South Florida are not asking for a hand-out in this bill. Miami-Dade County is committed to paying the fair market value of the land along with all associated fees in addition to completely funding subsequent construction of a fire station. In fact, the CBO has scored my bill at no cost to the taxpayers.

I wish to thank Chairman Peterson and Ranking Member Lucas for their prompt action on my bill. And I want to thank my colleagues from Miami-Dade County who cosponsored this bill, Congresswomen Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Congressmen Mario Diaz-Balart and Kendrick Meek. I urge passage of the bill and yield back the remainder of my time.