



February 2, 2022

Dear Governor Ron DeSantis, Senate President Wilton Simpson and House Speaker Chris Sprowls,

As Florida business leaders and former Pedro Pan unaccompanied migrant children airlifted from Cuba to the United States, we join the Most Reverend Archbishop Thomas Wenski in urging you to reverse the emergency order you imposed to block the issuance or renewals of state licenses for facilities, including those run by Catholic Charities, that care for and protect unaccompanied migrant children. We also urge you to oppose SB 1808 (Bean, R- Fernandina) and HB 1355 (Snyder, R-Palm City), currently being considered by the Florida Legislature. These policies take our state, our economy, and our communities backward.

As members of the IMPAC Fund, the Florida Chapter of the American Business Immigration Coalition (ABIC), we urge you to reverse this emergency order which would lead to the unconscionable and immoral result of innocent children being harmed and left without care. The damage would also extend to Florida-born U.S. children in need of care, but unable to receive it because nonprofits and foster care providers have been shut down.

We are also gravely concerned with the severe economic impact passing SB 1808 and HB 1355 would have across all sectors of Florida's economy, including tourism and agriculture. Employers are facing a devastating labor shortage that contributes to rising inflation and creates supply chain bottlenecks. We don't need politicians creating a crisis that will stunt our recovery.

Cubans, and more recently Venezuelans, Haitians, Nicaraguans and others, are part of a proud legacy of new immigrants building Florida into an economic powerhouse. The success of our immigrant communities was the result of welcoming immigration policies and supportive neighbors.

Immigration has always made Florida better and stronger. One in five Florida residents is an immigrant. Almost 400,000 are entrepreneurs, with \$8.1 billion per year in business income. Immigrant households earn \$138.6 billion per year, pay \$33.2 billion in federal, state, and local taxes, and have a total spending power of \$105.4 billion. Our state benefits enormously from the diversity, energy, and contributions of our immigrant communities. The children who have arrived recently will, with our help, make their way and follow in the proud and powerful footsteps of those who came before them.



Please rescind this harmful executive order blocking organizations from caring for vulnerable children and oppose SB 1808/ HB 1355. We respectfully request a meeting to speak with you about this issue and work with you to collaborate on solutions that will benefit all Floridians.

Sincerely,

**Mike Fernandez**, Chairman & CEO, MBF Healthcare Partners

**Tony Argiz**, Chairman & CEO, Morrison, Brown, Argiz & Farra, LLP

**Mario Murgado**, President & CEO, Murgado Automotive Group, Inc.

**Aida Levitan**, President, The Levitan Group

**Cesar Alvarez**, Senior Chairman, Greenberg Traurig

**Paul Cejas**, Chairman, PLC Investments, Inc.

**Paul DiMare**, President, DiMare Homestead, Inc.

**William Lucia**, Executive Director, Bill Lucia Associates LLC

**John Feeley**, Former Ambassador

**Leonard Boord**, Chief Executive Officer, Slon Capital

**Mario Cartaya**, CEO, Cartaya and Associate Architects

**Pilar Guzman Zavala**, CEO, Halfmoon Empanadas

**L. Felice Gorordo**, Co-Founder, Roots of Hope

**Jack Raslowsky**, President, College of St. Francis Xavier

**William Kunkler**, Executive Vice President, CC Industries

**Manny Diaz**, Board Member IMPAC Fund, Former Mayor of City of Miami

**Shannon Allen**, CEO, Grown

**Enrique Sosa**, Retired President, BP Amoco Chemicals



**David Lawrence**, Founder, Child Readiness Org.

**Khalid Muneer**, CEO, Jupiter Properties

**Jan Gautam**, CEO, IHRMC

**Federico Sanchez**, CEO, UBS

**Stephanie Rakofsky**, CEO, Social Work Consultants, Former Director of Social Work South Miami-Baptist Health Hospital

**Diana Brooks**, Co-CEO/Owner, VS/Brooks, Inc.

**Alex Blanco**, Board Member, Patterson Companies

**Alex Penelas**, Former Mayor of Miami Dade

**Cindy Lerner**, Former Mayor of Pinecrest

**William Diaz**, Founder, Casa Venezuela Orlando

**Pamela Segal Rhodes**, Senior Vice President, UBS

**Yael Muller**, Board Secretary, Miami New Drama

**Maria Antonietta Diaz**, Founder & President, Venezuela American Alliance

**Dr. Idler Bonhomme**, President, Haitian American Chamber

**Jorge Figueroa**, Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce

**Jorge Fernandez**, President, GBS Group

**Gonzalo Ulivi**, Managing Partner, Silverspot Cinema

**Sylvia Lam**, President, Decoevento LLC

**Sharon Socol**, Founder, Casa Valentina,

**Heather Hitzemann**, Accountant, WesPro



**Mark Blank**, Executive, Retired

**Gelys Chacin**, Analyst, University of Miami

**Diana Medina**, Director, Method To Madness, Inc.

**Josh Weber**, Managing Director, MBF Healthcare Partners