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**Subject:** YES for Convention Center Hotel Referendum - Let's get the facts straight!

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Dear Friends,

We've heard from several former elected officials in the last few weeks regarding the convention center hotel referendum. It's important that we get the facts straight.

Under the previous administration led by former Mayor Matti Bower and former Commissioner Michael Gongora, the hotel was part of a major development project that totaled well over \$1 billion, but did not include a new iconic public park and also required the city to transfer over 50 acres of our most valuable land to a third party developer.

Yes, the same ex-administration who is out there spreading misinformation and lies were the champions of a massive development effort around the convention center, which included an 800-room hotel at a substantial cost to the taxpayers.

Facts are a stubborn thing and all press accounts from 2012 and 2013 show consistent support by the previous administration for major development along the convention center corridor, which included residential units, retail shops, a full transfer of public land to a private developer, and even left open the possibility of a casino on public property.

Today, I am proud to join a near unanimous City Commission in supporting a scaled-back project that features a limited 800-room hotel with the public retaining ownership of the land, no possibility of a casino and NO COST to taxpayers whatsoever.

Thank you former Mayor Bower and former Commissioner Gongora for reminding us that the 800 room hotel began under your watch, the one where you both voted YES, was a good idea then and an EVEN BETTER idea today.

Let's finish the progress we started with a YES vote.

Please [read my recent letter to the Miami Herald](#).

Sincerely,

Philip Levine  
Mayor of Miami Beach

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