

XAVIER SUAREZ



Why are you running for office, and how does your experience prepare you to be effective as a public servant in this position?

I changed the city of Miami from Time Magazine's "Paradise Lost" to "The City of the Future." Erased a \$200M pension deficit, while reducing the millage rate; filed suits to provide single-member districts in county and school board; revived the city's housing agency and built the first 1,500 units of affordable housing after a decade of none being done; built two police substations and 11 mini-stations; united the city by diverse hiring and promotions, including three Black police chiefs; included and funded the Bayside minority component with 50% minority ownership and 80% minority workforce; also did the same for the Miami Arena; attracted three professional sports franchises (NBA, MLB and ice hockey); fought to preserve all waterfront spaces and the Marine Stadium, Guzman, Virginia Key Historic Black Beach and Coconut Grove Playhouse; sided with neighbors on every single zoning vote.

Why do you believe you are a strong candidate who will be able to win this election and earn the endorsement of Engage Miami?

I have been the strongest supporter of expanded, affordable (preferably free) public transportation, affordable housing (including the Cornerstone project with 40% workforce housing), summer jobs program (2,700), protection of neighborhoods from overdevelopment, and after-school and vocational programs in the history of this county.

Do you support requiring developers to include affordable housing in new developments or contribute to a citywide affordable housing fund?



On a scale of 1-5, how committed are you to this priority?



Please explain your position, and if in support, what steps specifically would you take to make proactive changes towards this priority, and if not, why?

Yes when they are building on government owned land or using government subsidies or tax credits. In my county commission districts, we built the first five (and the largest) transit-oriented developments along US1. When I was mayor of Miami, I resurrected the city's housing department and built 1,500 units with bonds approved 10 years before. In the county, I allocated \$9M to the Gibson project and another \$1.6M to senior housing in South Miami. I also voted to allocate \$50M to affordable housing from the general budget (the motion failed).

Do you support investing in green infrastructure and flood protection for neighborhoods most impacted by climate change?



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The money being spent on seawalls should instead be used to provide flood protection for upland neighborhoods. The shoreline parks and other open spaces should have living shorelines.

If elected, would you defend, support, and protect immigrants in the City of Miami, regardless of status?



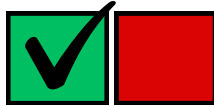
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I have opposed Alligator Alcatraz and support temporary protected status (TPS) for all immigrants from Venezuela, Haiti and Cuba.

If elected, would you commit to take action to ensure the LGBTQ+ community is safe and actively supported?



On a scale of 1-5, how committed are you to this priority?



Please explain your position, and if in support, what steps specifically would you take to make proactive changes towards this priority, and if not, why?

As a county commissioner, I voted for protection for all county employees, regardless of sexual orientation.

Do you support expanding city-funded youth jobs programs and funding local small business support in historically underserved communities?



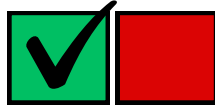
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I initiated the county's summer jobs program (2,700 jobs); fought for minority procurement and living wage in county bids and at airport leases; pushed for state to do vocational training, and otherwise supported every initiative to help small and minority businesses. (See also what I did as Mayor of Miami with Bayside and the Miami Arena.)

Would you support allocating city funds toward programs that directly serve residents living below the poverty line such as rental assistance, food access, or guaranteed income pilots?



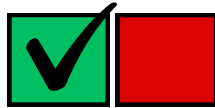
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I have testified in Congress on behalf of poverty agencies and every kind of subsistence help for homeless and fought with Carrie Meek to keep the state documentary stamp surtax from being misused.

Many parks are locked on weekends or have bathrooms or facilities that are locked. Would you ensure these public spaces are accessible, well-funded, and available to neighbors on weekends?



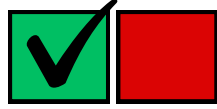
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I was the first county commissioner to oppose Mayor Gimenez's effort to close down libraries, and the first to propose increasing the library millage rate and pointed out the shell game of reducing it to .18 from .48, using reserves to maintain services. Had lunch w Director Baker today and found out we are adding one new library. I fought the hardest of anybody for opening libraries on weekends.

Do you support creating a digital budget interactive tool at the municipal level to increase transparency and make it easier for residents to understand and engage with how public dollars are spent?



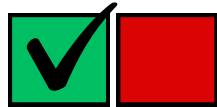
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God, yes. Even after four decades of civic activities, including 17.5 years in office at city and county, I barely can decipher the budget. I will continue that battle.

There is currently a coalition called Stronger Miami working to change the city charter to move elections to even years, expand the number of districts from 5 to 9, and require fair redistricting criteria. Do you support this initiative?



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I not only support it but contributed funds to the effort. (See their press release of even date.)