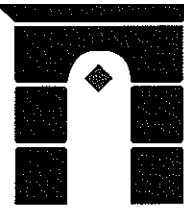


CORAL GABLES



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Developing Business • Building Community

**2009-2010  
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**President & CEO**

*Mark A. Trowbridge*

May 20, 2010

Patrick Salerno

City Manager

City of Coral Gables City Hall

405 Biltmore Way

Coral Gables, FL 33134

Mr. Manager:

As a follow-up to a conversation we had at our Executive Committee at the Chamber this past week, I want to discuss with you our concerns regarding the future of the *Flags on Ponce* program that the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce helped create in 1993. Our long-term goal is to ensure that the *Flags on Ponce* continues, while not being a burden on the Chamber and City's time and resources in the short-term.

We believe that we can simplify the program so that it is more manageable and feasible in these challenging economic times, while receiving the recognition and appreciation it so richly deserves. The last two years have been a significant financial burden on the Chamber with sponsorships dwindling and little support from our partners in helping secure the dollars to pay for the flags.

In order for us to continue our role, it is our recommendation that we reduce the program in scope to include only those nations and their corresponding flags that represent the Consulates housed in Coral Gables and our Sister City countries.

The Chamber and our international committee would work with the various entities to ensure that they would provide us a flag once per year, as well as work in conjunction with the City and the IACC to secure funds to pay for the program. In its current form, it has simply become too costly for the Chamber to manage and maintain.

We strongly believe that these changes will make the program more manageable for all parties, raise the profile for this worthy program, and involve our international partners in a much more significant way. We would ask for the City's continued support to install the flags each year, remove them prior to hurricane season, and handle all maintenance related to the poles that the flags fly on along Ponce de Leon Boulevard.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for helping to maintain the program these many years on behalf of and in partnership with the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Trowbridge  
President & CEO

cc: Sarah Artecona, Chair  
Deirdre Nero, Vice Chair, International Affairs  
Carolina Rendeiro, Chair, IACC