



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
September 13, 2022

ITEM TITLE:

Ordinance on First Reading. AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA, AMENDING ARTICLE VII, UNDER CHAPTER 14 OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES CODE TO ADD ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS TO HOTELS/MOTELS, PROVIDING FOR REPEALER, SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION, ENFORCEABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

BRIEF HISTORY:

It being well established that hotels/motels that allow for the hourly rental of rooms, are frequented by individuals engaged in prostitution and/or human trafficking, as well as other illegal activity. Human trafficking has become an epidemic of significant consequences to our community such that the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office established a Human Trafficking Unit in 2012 to more effectively combat the issue. Victims of human sex trafficking are often exposed to serious health risks, including sexually transmitted diseases, drug and alcohol addiction, broken bones and burns, memory loss, miscarriages or forced abortions, as well as PTSD, anxiety, fear and psychological trauma. Individuals engaged in prostitution are exposed to similar physical and psychological effects. Acknowledging the importance of this issue, in 2016, the City Commission created Article VII, Rental Periods for Hotels/Motels, of the City Code, to prohibit hourly rentals. Also acknowledging the gravity of the issue, in 2022, the Florida Legislature passed Senate Bill 898, now codified in section 509.098, F.S. which prohibits a hotel/motel operator from offering an hourly rate for an accommodation. To further protect potential victims and strengthen the impact of these laws, this Ordinance adds sections 14-142 and 14-143 to Article VII, to require certain attestations and signage.

1. Draft Ordinance