

Proclamation

REQUESTED BY THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BROWARD COUNTY

WHEREAS, coral reef ecosystems locally, nationally, and globally represent extraordinary biological, geological, and economic resources; and

WHEREAS, coral reefs protect coastal shorelines from erosion, produce sand for beaches, create habitat for diverse animals and plants, and provide nurseries, breeding grounds, and food for fish, thus creating a tremendous economic value through fishing, diving, recreation, and enjoyment; and

WHEREAS, the coral reefs of southeast Florida, including those of Broward County, generate over \$6 billion in sales and income, and sustain more than 61,000 jobs annually; and

WHEREAS, coral reefs worldwide, as well as in Florida, are suffering degradation from effects of overfishing, coastal construction and development, land based sources of pollution, and global climate change; and

WHEREAS, coral reefs and their associated ecosystems can and do rebound if protections exist and stressors do not become overwhelming; and

WHEREAS, 2008 has been designated as the International Year of the Reef (IYOR) by the International Coral Reef Initiative. IYOR is a worldwide campaign to raise awareness about the value and importance of coral reefs and to motivate people to take action to protect them; and

WHEREAS, SEFCRI, the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative, led by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, is a local action strategy for collaborative action among government and non-governmental partners to identify and implement priority actions needed to reduce key threats to southeast Florida coral reef resources, and SEFCRI has developed outstanding public service announcements about coral reefs; and

WHEREAS, the 11th International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS) will be held in Broward County from July 7 through 11, 2008, and Broward County is donating use of space in the Greater Fort. Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center for the symposium; and

WHEREAS, the 11th ICRS will be the premier meeting of its kind and the largest meeting of coral reef scientists, managers, conservationists, and students in the world. The conference will highlight important areas of knowledge, concern, and management of coral reefs to address their most pressing threats; and

WHEREAS, this is the first time that the ICRS has been held in the continental United States in over 30 years; and

WHEREAS, the State of Florida and the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, a coalition of federal agencies, states, and territories that have interests in or purview over corals reefs, are co-hosting the 11th ICRS; and

WHEREAS, Nova Southeastern University, through its Oceanographic Center, is spearheading the organization of this important conference; and

WHEREAS, the Broward County Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department is leading several field trips to show local reefs to Symposium participants; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA:

That the Board hereby supports the International Year of the Reef 2008, recognizes the work of the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative, and designates the week of July 7 through July 11, 2008, as "11th INTERNATIONAL CORAL REEF SYMPOSIUM" in Broward County, Florida.

July 7, 2008
Date



Lois Wexler
Mayor