

## Keri O'Brien

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**From:** Sam Kaufman <sam@samkaufmanlaw.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 8, 2025 3:03 PM  
**To:** Keri O'Brien  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Please read this statement this evening on July 8, 2025 at the special city commission meeting

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First, I would like to say that I'm extremely disappointed I can't be there tonight. I am out of the country on a long-planned family trip, but this meeting—one of the most important we've faced—was scheduled without checking if all commissioners could attend. That's not just disrespectful; it's unacceptable. Two of us are gone, and this still moved forward. Why?

How was this date chosen? Was there any discussion? Any transparency? Or is this another behind-closed-doors move—like how the former City Manager was ousted?

Nevertheless, let me be clear: I support our police. I fully support our Chief. And I absolutely stand with our immigrant community—our neighbors, our workforce, our friends. I thank everyone showing up tonight in defense of human dignity and public safety.

Unfortunately, we landed in this legal mess because we didn't get proper guidance before the June 30th vote. We should have had expert legal counsel from the start. Why didn't we?

Now, instead of slowing down and considering all of our options—including joining South Miami's legal challenge—the Mayor rushed to reverse course. The City's expert legal counsel has confirmed we are in a strong position *by doing nothing*. We haven't entered or rescinded an agreement. There's no legal liability. So why panic? The Mayor scheduled this meeting **prior** to discussing the legal options with the attorneys. Why not wait for the courts to decide whether the 287(g) agreement is mandatory or voluntary?

Florida law **does not require** cities to sign 287(g). It only applies to sheriffs. Our Police Chief signed that agreement without public input or Commission approval. That's a problem. And we were right to recognize it as void.

If the Mayor's resolution is approved (which I do not support) to enter into the 287(g) agreement, then at least let's fight it in court alongside South Miami. But make no mistake—that entering into the 287(g) agreement is the **worst** option for our community.

Key West depends on tourism. We depend on trust. Turning our police into ICE agents erodes both. This isn't about politics—it's about public safety and economic survival.

There are no sanctuary cities in Florida. We **comply** with the law. But we don't need to go further than the law requires—especially not when doing so makes us less safe and more vulnerable to lawsuits.

We took a stand for our values on June 30th. South Miami stands with us. And we should stand with our Haitian neighbors now—TPS is at risk, and this is a moment for moral clarity.

Please. Do not let fear win. Do not rush. And do not abandon the people we swore to protect.

I respectfully urge my fellow commissioners to postpone this vote until the courts have determined whether the City is legally obligated to enter into this agreement. Additionally, such an important decision should be made when the full commission is present. Approving the Mayor's resolution at this time is premature and unnecessary, and could place both the City and our residents in a disadvantageous position.

Commissioner Sam Kaufman

Sent from my iPhone