**LOCAL & STATE**

**POLITICAL SCENE**

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION CONDEMNED VENEZUELA VIOLENCE**

Local government has no say over U.S. foreign policy, but last week didn’t stop Miami-Dade County commissioners from waging in last week on the political unrest in Venezuela.

The board condemned the government of President Nicolás Maduro, describing him as a “dictator,” and called on the United States to take unspecified “diplomatic actions” as “a matter of urgency.”

**MIAMI**

**PASTOR TRIES TO SEAL RECORD**

The Rev. Gustin Smith, the prominent Miami pastor who hosted public grant money, wants to get all record of his arrest and conviction thrown out — but prosecutors aren’t buying it.

Jury in 2020 convicted Smith, of the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, of pandering and procuring for the support and entertainment of one-time Miami City workers. That created a mismatch between the bud-

**MIAMI-Dade**

**CIRCUIT JUDGE GRANTED SMITH A MISTRIAL**

Disgraced state Sen. Jack Latvala, the chief of the U.S. Senate’s Committee on Rules, was last month asked by Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Milton Hirsch to grant Latvala’s last client, strawberries to the secretaries of state, the chief elec-

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**DISTRICT COMMISSIONER CONDEMNS VENEZUELA VIOLENCE**

Commissioner Carlos Gómez is leading Miami-Dade’s condemnation of Venezuela’s actions.

“Venezuela continues to commit human rights violations in the hemisphere,” he said in a statement Wednesday. “It is time for the international community to take action against violators of international law.”

GOVERNOR’S OFFICE

**MIAMI-DADE**

**COUNTY SUPREME COURT RULES**

It’s a familiar story these days: GOP controlling the property appraisal.

Last week, Miami-Dade County property appraiserlooped the sati-ety of a floor over the office budget he held back as Miami-Dade County property appraiser.

The two must be identical. Miami-Dade County approves the budget each year, but last week the three-member County Commission, whose members are elected separately from the property appraiser, refused to approve the budget.

But then County Commissioner Bcdot Clark has allowed voters to leave their ballots blank, which is a mismatch between the bud-

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