



Press Release

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[en español abajo]

Hialeah Draws Thousands in Call for a Free Cuba

More than 8,000 attendees, led by Mayor Bryan Calvo gathered at Milander Park to reject half-measures and demand real political freedom on the island.



HIALEAH, FL [March 25, 2026] — More than 8,000 people gathered at Milander Park Tuesday evening for the “Free Cuba Rally,” led by Mayor Bryan Calvo and co-hosted by Alex Otaola, founder of the Cuban Anti-Communist Foundation. The event marked a powerful show of unity from South Florida’s Cuban exile community and its allies, bringing together residents, elected officials, and prominent voices from across the diaspora around a clear demand: a truly free Cuba.

The rally featured remarks from State Senator Ileana Garcia, Rosa María Payá, José Daniel Ferrer, Los Pichy Boys, Alex Otaola, Orlando Boronat, Carlos Otero, and Mima y Yoel, alongside performances by Amaury Gutiérrez, Yotuel, El Chacal, Jacob Forever, Los 3 de La Habana, DJ Yus, El Inva, Lena Burke, and Abraham Ruiz. The program reflected both the cultural and political force of a community shaped by exile and sustained by a shared sense of purpose.

In his keynote address, Mayor Calvo spoke from personal experience as the son of a Mariel-era exile, grounding his message in the reality faced by families on the island and the lessons carried by those who left. He warned against accepting superficial reforms or negotiated arrangements that leave the current power structure intact, calling instead for a transition rooted in accountability, individual liberty, and democratic governance.



“Cuba will not trade one form of control for another; the people have endured too much, lost too much, to settle for anything less than true freedom,” said Mayor Calvo.

The rally underscored Hialeah’s historic role as a leading voice within the Cuban exile community. Throughout the evening, speakers and attendees emphasized that the current moment demands clarity, not compromise, and that any path forward must reflect the sacrifices made over generations by those who fled the regime and those still living under it.

Tuesday night’s turnout and message reflected a community that remains deeply engaged, organized, and unwilling to accept anything short of full political freedom for the Cuban people.

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EN ESPAÑOL

Hialeah reúne a miles en un llamado por una Cuba libre

Más de 8,000 personas, encabezadas por el alcalde Bryan Calvo, se congregaron en Milander Park para rechazar exigir una libertad política real en la isla.



HIALEAH, FL [25 de marzo de 2026] — Más de 8,500 personas se congregaron la noche del martes en Milander Park para el “Free Cuba Rally”, liderado por el alcalde Bryan Calvo y coorganizado por Alex Otaola, fundador de la Cuban Anti-Communist Foundation. El evento marcó una contundente muestra de unidad de la comunidad cubana en el exilio en el sur de Florida y sus aliados, reuniendo a residentes, funcionarios electos y voces influyentes de toda la diáspora en torno a una exigencia clara: una Cuba verdaderamente libre.

El rally contó con intervenciones de la senadora estatal Ileana García, Rosa María Payá, José Daniel Ferrer, Los Pichy Boys, Alex Otaola, Orlando Boronat, Carlos Otero y Mima y Yoel, junto a presentaciones de Amaury Gutiérrez, Yotuel, El Chacal, Jacob Forever, Los 3 de La Habana, DJ Yus, El Inva, Lena Burke y Abraham Ruiz. El programa reflejó tanto la fuerza cultural como el peso político de una comunidad marcada por el exilio y unida por un propósito compartido.

En su discurso principal, el alcalde Calvo habló desde su experiencia personal como hijo de un exiliado del Mariel, anclando su mensaje en la realidad que viven las familias en la isla y en las lecciones que cargan quienes tuvieron que irse. Advirtió sobre el riesgo de aceptar reformas superficiales o acuerdos negociados que dejen intacta la estructura de poder, y llamó a una transición basada en rendición de cuentas, libertad individual y un sistema verdaderamente democrático.



“Cuba no va a cambiar una forma de control por otra; el pueblo ha sufrido demasiado, ha perdido demasiado, como para conformarse con algo que no sea la libertad plena”, afirmó el alcalde Calvo.

El rally reafirmó el papel histórico de Hialeah como una de las principales voces del exilio cubano. A lo largo de la noche, tanto los oradores como los asistentes insistieron en que este momento exige claridad, no concesiones, y que cualquier camino hacia adelante debe honrar los sacrificios de generaciones que huyeron del régimen y de quienes aún viven bajo él.

La asistencia y el mensaje de la noche reflejan una comunidad activa, organizada y firme en su postura: no aceptar nada que no sea la libertad política total para el pueblo cubano.

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About the City of Hialeah

The City of Hialeah, incorporated in 1925, is the sixth largest municipality in Florida, serving over 233,000 residents living in approximately 20-square miles. Hialeah, located in NW Miami-Dade County, has a Hispanic population of over 94%. A working class community, Hialeah is viewed as an industrial city that continues to grow. “The City of Progress” as known to many, is home to many Cuban exiles. The City of Hialeah is a full service city offering quality and affordable services to residents of all ages and abilities. Hialeah is a vibrant, family-oriented community marked by cultural heritage and traditions known for its myriad of mom and pop stores which productively compete against national retail and restaurant chains and franchises.

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