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Commentary

## **Attorney Chides Rubio for Insisting on U.S.-Cuba Trade Embargo**

Adolfo Garcia, Daily Business Review

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As a Cuban exile whose family lost everything when we moved to Miami in February 1961, I could not disagree more with U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio's attack on the Obama administration's policy change with respect to Cuba.

I am disappointed that Sen. Rubio, who has positioned himself as a presidential candidate, has failed to grasp the lessons of the last 50-plus years of Cuban history. The U.S. embargo has failed to bring about any positive changes for the people of Cuba. And because there are negative consequences in the United States for non-U.S. companies doing business with Cuba, this same policy has created problems for our relations with many countries, including Canada, and others in Latin America and Europe.

This is why I am hopeful that the Obama administration's policy change announced last December will at long last bring about the kind of positive meaningful changes for Cuba and the U.S. that the embargo and related U.S. policy of the past 50-plus years has clearly failed to achieve.

I am a lifelong Republican who disagrees with President Obama on many subjects. However, when it comes to Cuba, I am grateful and thankful that our president and his administration have the vision and foresight to take this courageous fresh step. This policy change intended to bring a better future for Cuba and its people — only 90 miles away from the United States — and for the U.S. in its foreign policy is long overdue.

In 1961 when I was 12 years old, my family left a comfortable life in Havana and moved into to a one-bedroom apartment in a very modest section of Miami, a half block away from what was then the Orange Bowl. I will never forget sleeping on a living room couch that turned into a bed each night. I will never forget the very simple Formica table in our kitchen, which is all that we had. I will never forget the menial odd jobs that my father had in Miami, after being a successful business executive in Cuba who dressed elegantly each day. I will never forget my mother becoming a nanny for wealthy Miamians who would pay her a few dollars an hour to care for their children.

My deceased parents would not be happy with me and my support for the steps that the Obama administration has taken. However, I truly believe that this is the only way to bring about the kind of positive change we are all craving, including addressing compensation issues for expropriated properties.

While I can sympathize with and relate to Sen. Rubio with regard to the emotional issues and the anger and frustration felt by many Cubans and Cuban exiles here in the United States, the fact is that this is 2015 and not 1960.

Sen. Rubio, while your stance is "tough," the only thing that you offer is the continuation of a failed and bankrupt policy that has had over 50 years to prove that it has not worked. As hard as it may be for many of us emotionally and personally, let's get on with life and give a fresh start and a new policy a chance.

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