



Dear Residents,

It is an honor and privilege to have been elected to be your voice and to represent you, the citizens of our coastal communities from Deerfield Beach to Fort Lauderdale. As your County Commissioner I look forward to continuing to improve resident's quality of life by focusing on several key issues in our community. Here are some recent headlines from around the county:

Texting While Driving Resolution

According to the National Highway Safety Administration, on average, sending or reading a text message takes a person's eyes off the road for 5 seconds, which, driving at a speed of 55 miles per hour, is the equivalent of driving the length of a football field with one's eyes closed. In December 2018, I sponsored a resolution in support of House Bill 45 and Senate Bill 76, which seek to prevent crashes related to the wireless communication devices while driving, improve roadway safety, and reduce injuries, deaths and property damage resulting from cellphone use. Currently, Florida has a ban on texting while driving that can only be enforced as a secondary offence when a law enforcement officer stops a motorist on a suspected violation of a primary offense of the uniform traffic laws. I am pleased that with my colleagues support we can show our support for strengthening road safety in our community and preventing injury and death by prohibiting the use wireless communication devices while driving.

Sober Homes Resolution

In December, I also sponsored a resolution supporting Senate Bill 102, which creates a mandatory certification program for recovery residences, also known as sober homes, in Florida. In 2017, Broward County treated 1,642 cases of opioid overdoses and continues to see a dramatic number of opioid-related deaths. Currently, Florida law provides only for a voluntary certification program for sober homes. Senate Bill 102 creates a mandatory certification program, which would promote uniform regulation and accountability. The regulation of recovery residences is necessary to create a consistent standard of operation that provides uniform and safe procedures, promotes accountability and lessens abuse. This resolution also gained the support of my colleagues and I'm pleased that we can demonstrate unity on this very important issue.

Homelessness: Home for the Holidays Initiative

In our community we see homelessness almost every day and in Broward County with housing costs rising and wages staying stagnant it is imperative that we find sensible solutions and assists individuals experiencing homelessness or on the verge of becoming homeless.

This past year the County embarked on a mission to end homelessness as we know it in our community by creating the Homelessness Collaborative with the assistance of the City of Fort Lauderdale, United Way of Broward County, the Broward Business Council on Homelessness and the

Broward Homeless Continuum of Care. Beginning with the encampment in downtown, Fort Lauderdale, members created a comprehensive plan for helping individuals in the encampment find a path to safe, stable, permanent housing, with supportive services as needed. Recognizing and adopting the national best practice of “Housing first” on November 26th, 2018 the collaborative began to implement its plan. In the first day, 18 individuals experiencing homelessness left the encampment voluntarily, and nine tents were taken down with owner consent. By 4 p.m. Thursday, November 29, all 41 of the tents had been taken down and all 80 individuals relocated temporarily to nearby motels while individual housing plans were being finalized. Every pre-identified resident of the encampment who wanted services was offered services. Some individuals reunited with family members out of state, some were eligible for rapid rehousing, and others were eligible for permanent supportive housing. While this first step was a great success and major milestone in ending homelessness in Broward County, it is by no means the final chapter.

Housing teams continue to move clients forward in the path to permanent housing. Outreach teams continue to address the needs not only of those who formerly stayed in the encampment, but also those who were not previously identified as residents of the encampment, who came to the encampment seeking services, and those experiencing homelessness in Broward County every day. There are at least 2,300 individuals experiencing homelessness in Broward County, according to the January 2018 Point-in-Time count. My hope is that we continue this journey to ending homelessness in Broward County and continue to collaborate with cities and the business community in order to provide the needed resources to assisting all individuals experiencing homelessness in Broward County.

Broward County is gearing up for the 2019 Point-In-Time Homeless Count. Volunteers are needed to conduct a survey of the homeless in our community. Collection of the data will begin from the night of Wednesday, January 23rd through Saturday, January 26, 2019. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Shira Fowlkes at pitvolunteers@brhpc.org or for additional information visit the Broward County [Point-In-Time Homeless Count website](#).

Environmental

- **Mooring Buoys:** Broward County was recently chosen as a grant recipient by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to support the installation of ten mooring buoys in District 4. The installation of these buoys will help protect Broward's prized reefs by providing a way for boaters to secure their vessels at a fixed location over the natural coral reef and allow fishers and divers to enjoy our reefs without harmful effects from potential anchor damage. The installations are offshore of Deerfield Beach and Hillsboro Beach. Additionally, this investment will assist the program by also maintaining a fixed number of buoys and relocation existing ones.
- **Manatees:** Manatee season is in full effect in South Florida and runs through March 31 as hundreds of manatees move south into the warm waters of Broward County. Unfortunately, the Florida manatee is listed as “threatened” by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). In order to assist the community, become more aware of these beautiful creatures in our water ways Broward County encourages residents and visitors to report manatee sightings to the County's Environmental Planning and Community Resilience Division by using the ‘I Spy a Manatee’ mobile app. The app can be used to report manatees and their activities and view manatee protection and boating safety zones in Broward County.

Broward County Economic Engines Update

- **FLL** – Broward County’s Fort Lauderdale International Airport continues its transformation in order to accommodate the growing number of visitors flying through our airport year after year. In 2019, more improvements are coming to Terminal 4 including U.S. Customs and Border Protection functionality, advanced baggage handling system equipment, a new “meet and greet” area and additional passenger queuing space. Work is underway now on the final phase of the U.S. Customs Federal Inspection Services (FIS) Facility Project slated for substantial completion by September 2019. By next fall, we’ll be able to operate all 12 international gates in Concourse G and process more than 1,800 passengers per hour.

For more information on all the exciting new things at FLL please visit [Broward County Airports](#).

- **PEV**- Broward County’s Port Everglades recently welcomed Holland America Line’s newest cruise ship, *Nieuw Statendam*. The Port will welcome 10 Holland America cruise ships and on February 2nd the Port will have the honor of being the host Port for the *Nieuw Statendam*’s official naming ceremony. Additionally, the Celebrity Edge a 2,918- cruise ship and the newest ship to join Celebrity Cruises’ fleet, arrived at her new home in Port Everglades at Celebrity’s new Terminal 25. Celebrity Edge will sail on seven-night itineraries to the Eastern and Western Caribbean.

For more information on Broward County’s Port Everglades please visit [Broward County’s Port Everglades](#).

[The Resident's Guide to Government](#) provides a convenient resource to help people stay connected to their local government. It includes contact information for County officials and Federal, State and local agencies. Visitors can subscribe to E-news and social media sites. Please sign up at www.Broward.org/Commission/District4 to receive email updates from our office. You can also follow me on [Twitter](#) and like my [Facebook](#) page.

If there is anything that we can do to assist you with your vision for a better Broward, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 954-357-7004 or by email at LFisher@broward.org.

Once again, I’d like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you as your County Commissioner.

Best regards,



Lamar P. Fisher
County Commissioner
District 4