



MAY 2019

Dear Residents,

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

#### **Hurricane Season (June 1<sup>st</sup> thru November 30<sup>th</sup>)**

Hurricane season starts June 1<sup>st</sup> and now is the time to prepare for any disastrous weather event that might come our way. During this month, residents are encouraged to determine their risk, develop an evacuation plan, assemble disaster supplies, give insurance policies a checkup, strengthen their home, write down important contact information including your neighbors, and complete a written plan.

The County is also hosting its 5th Annual Open House on Hurricane Preparedness in the Broward Municipal Services District (BMSD) at the African American Research Library and Cultural Center, 2650 Sistrunk Boulevard, on Saturday, June 1st from 10AM – 2PM. You can learn from emergency management experts on preparing for hazards and resources available from dozens of County agencies and service providers. There will also be easy on-site registration for the Vulnerable Population Registry, AlertBroward and more.

For more information on hurricane preparedness please visit [www.Broward.org/Hurricane](http://www.Broward.org/Hurricane).

#### **Texting While Driving**

On Monday, April 29th, HB 107/SB 76 – The Texting While Driving Bill passed through both chambers. The bill makes texting and driving a primary offense. Additionally, the legislation prohibits handling a phone in school and construction zones. In order to give motorists time to get used to the new law, from October through December, police can pull motorists over for texting while driving, but can only issue a warning. Fines will start to be issued beginning Jan. 1, 2020 for texting while driving. The penalty would be \$30 plus court costs for a first violation and \$60 for another within 5 years plus court costs. One of the main concerns of the bill dealt with racial profiling. These concerns were addressed, as police will now be required to record the race and ethnicity of each driver they cite and report the results to the state. This bill is a personal priority for me and was unanimously made a priority for the Board of County Commissioners in December 2018. I'm glad to see the State legislature understands the importance of this legislation as it will contribute to saving lives on our roadways.

#### **Affordable Housing**

The Broward Housing Council has contracted with the Florida International University (FIU) Metropolitan Center for the preparation and update of the Broward County affordable housing needs and conditions. The study provides current data on Housing Supply, Housing Demand, Future Housing Demand and provides Municipal and Unincorporated area demographic profiles and housing supply and demand for each area by very low, low- and moderate-income populations. **One of the most important findings from this study is that the housing affordability demands in Broward County and its municipalities have not improved despite impressive post-recession job growth numbers and low unemployment. With 53.9 percent cost-burdened households, Broward County is one of the most unaffordable places to live in the United States.** Other notable findings from the study are outlined below.

- As of November 2018, the overall average rent in Broward County was \$1,843, which represented an 8.0 percent year-over-year increase;
- The \$350,000 median sale price is only affordable to households earning 210 percent and above the County's median household income (12.6 percent of all Broward County households);
- The median sales price of 3- and 4-bedroom existing single-family homes has increased in most of Broward County's largest municipalities;
- The majority (54 percent) of Broward County workers are employed in lower wage service sector occupations with hourly wages that translate to workers earning 40-60 percent of the median household income;
- There are 147,313 cost-burdened renter households in Broward County, of which, 52.7 percent (77,677 renter households) are "severely" cost-burdened (pay in excess of 50 percent of their incomes on housing costs);

The study provides us with an understanding of the shifting demands for housing and how critical it is for the creation of effective housing policies and strategies. These findings are astonishing, and it is imperative that the County and municipalities work together to solve this affordable housing crisis that Broward County residents are experiencing.

#### **Summer Savings**

The Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau is now offering a Summer Savings promotion for residents and visitors to enjoy the many great activities in Broward County on a budget. There are great 2-for-1 deals from May 1-September 30. Go on a diving excursion, spend a day relaxing at a spa, or book a VIP package at a top resort.

To sign up, please visit <https://www.sunny.org/plan-your-trip/deals-and-coupons/summer-2-for-1/>.

Once again, I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you as your County Commissioner. Please sign up at [Broward.org/Commission/District4](http://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](mailto:LFisher@broward.org).

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lamar P. Fisher', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Lamar P. Fisher  
County Commissioner  
District 4