

# HEALTH *FIRST*™

## BLUEGRASS

496 Southland Drive • Lexington, KY 40503

(859) 288-2425 Fax (859) 721-3918

[www.healthfirstlex.com](http://www.healthfirstlex.com)

April 9, 2021

Congressman Andy Barr  
2430 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: FY22 Appropriations Community Project Funding Interest  
City of Lexington, KY  
BFREE Project

Dear Congressman Barr,

On behalf of HealthFirst Bluegrass I am writing to express my support for the City of Lexington's application for the BFREE Project. At HealthFirst Bluegrass we recognize the deep impact that substance misuse continues to have on our patients and the community at large. Although our community experienced positive gains in reduction of overdose fatality in 2018/19, we are sad to know that pressures and barriers experienced in 2020 and likely 2021 are cutting into that progress. It is at times like these where innovation must prevail to ensure we continue our growth.

HealthFirst Bluegrass supports this proposal to reduce barriers associated with re-entry and increase recovery engagement. As a licensed clinical social worker with nearing 20 years of experience in this field, I attest that housing, transportation, and ability to create and navigate a recovery plan, are all key factors when seeking optimal patient outcomes. Sadly, it is often the case that these supports are not available and the window of opportunity closes.

At HealthFirst Bluegrass we are excited and proud to know the City of Lexington is strategizing creative and innovative ways to support our citizens while that window of opportunity and time for change is open. We value our relationship with the City of Lexington and maintain great hope that through these strong community partnerships we will see the burden of substance misuse continue to decline.

Sincerely,



Tara Cockrell Stanfield, MPA, MSW, LCSW  
Chief Integrated Care Officer



Wayne Linscott, CEO

HealthFirst Bluegrass

