

OPINION



Louisville Democratic Rep. Daniel Grossberg at a Kentucky Legislative Ethics Commission hearing Feb. 2. Grossberg agreed to a settlement and a public reprimand for violating the state ethics code.

After slap on the wrist settlement, Rep. Grossberg should resign

BY LINDA BLACKFORD
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The tawdry saga of state Rep. Daniel Grossberg is finally at a much-needed end, and yet resolution and accountability still appear elusive.

Two \$1,000 fines and a reprimand are the Legislative Ethics Commission’s answer to multiple accusations of sexual harassment against the Louisville Democrat. (Or I should say charges of “ethical misconduct” because sexual harassment is still not a defined part of the Kentucky Code of Legislative Ethics.)

According to my colleagues, Austin Horn and Alex Acquisto, who tirelessly exposed this behavior over the past two years, the commission fined Grossberg for intimidation of a Louisville strip club that banned him for life after he allegedly groped a dancer. Accord-

ing to the Ethics Commission order, Grossberg denies it but “stipulates there may be sufficient evidence to find a statutory violation.”

The second fine is for his conduct toward Emma Curtis, who is now a Lexington Urban County Council member. The order stated that Grossberg “may have violated” the ethics code, but that Grossberg “is actively engaged in counseling, therapy and skills training to ensure his behavior is not repeated.”

Ethics commission chairman Dave Nicholas told Grossberg the commission hopes “you have learned from this and that you appreciate the idea that we tried to discipline you in a way that doesn’t severely damage you.”

It’s very sweet that the man in charge of legislative ethics wants to make sure that the man accused of widespread harassment isn’t damaged. Unlike, say, his female accusers.

And speaking of which, here’s what Grossberg himself had to say:

“After 18 months of investigation, I am relieved and grateful to have been

fully cleared of these frivolous allegations of sexual harassment and misconduct. From the beginning, I maintained that these accusations were false, and the facts have now borne that out.”

A finding of probable cause, followed by a settlement with two fines and a reprimand is not “fully cleared,” and the fact that Grossberg showed no remorse or apparently any understanding of what just happened shows why he should not be in office.

Sarah Ritter, one of Grossberg’s accusers prepared testimony that she was not able to give to the commission, but read out loud instead: “I’m testifying today because these actions caused lasting physical and psychological harm, and because no one, especially someone elected to represent their neighbor should be permitted to behave this way without accountability.”

As this paper said in an editorial in 2024, “Grossberg’s lack of good judgment, his unwillingness to accept responsibility and his predatory and intimidating behavior online and

in person show he is unfit for elected office. He must resign immediately.”

Two years later, he still should step down.

NOW LEGISLATORS NEED TO DO THE RIGHT THING

Something good could still come out of this depressing episode: Right now, sexual harassment is not actually prohibited in the Kentucky Code of Legislative Ethics, and the General Assembly could change that to make it a specific charge.

The commission has asked them to do it at least twice before. Last year, Rep. Kim Holloway, a Mayfield Republican, filed a bill that didn’t even get a committee hearing.

This year, Sen. Cassie Chambers Armstrong, a Louisville Democrat, is carrying the bill, which she said was partially inspired by Grossberg’s case.

Sexual harassment is against the law for the rest of us under federal and state civil rights laws. I won’t speculate on why Kentucky lawmakers don’t think they should play by those same rules. Instead, I will point out what a wonderful opportunity they have before them.

It’s doubtful that Grossberg will do the right thing. But the rest of his colleagues certainly can, making it more clear that this kind of behavior is not tolerated in Kentucky’s halls of power.

Voters want real people, not tired talking points from political campaigns

BY TERI CARTER



I was talking with someone outside Kentucky who asked about U.S. Rep. Thomas Massie. How will Massie fare against Ed Gallrein, the primary opponent backed by President Trump in an effort to punish Massie for daring to disagree with the president?

This primary puzzles me. Massie is a unique figure who has always been popular in his district — I’d even call him something of a rockstar in Kentucky politics — whereas Gallrein was recently (if narrowly) defeated in my state senate district by Aaron Reed.

While I have never met Massie, he seems an affable fellow. Surprising no one, I disagree with him on most policies, but I also suspect that if we ever met in person we would have a cordial conversation, agree to disagree, shake hands, and be on with it. As I told the outsider asking the questions, I can’t help but respect Massie for holding firm to his belief system (however much I personally abhor some of those beliefs) under such intense pressure from the White House.

A rare, rare bird. There are so few politicians who seem to believe their own words and who, it has to be said, are starting to sound like robots.

And this is not just problem for the Republican Party.

There are a lot of candi-

SEE CARTER, 3C



TIERNEN L. CROSS NYT

Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) speaks during a House Judiciary Committee hearing with FBI Director Kash Patel, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Sept. 17, 2025. Massie is facing a Trump-backed challenge from Ed Gallrein.

Lexington’s history of redlining shown in new documentary

BY LINDA BLACKFORD
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It’s been almost six months since the documentary “Lexington: Resilience in the Redline” premiered at the Lyric Theatre, and researcher and filmmaker Regina Lewis says it’s been a whirlwind.

“We’ve had more than five screenings, and a lot of people are really connecting to these stories,” said Lewis, who is also a Ph.D. student at the University of Kentucky. “They say ‘I didn’t realize these were the policies that shaped the way I grew up, and how it created the world in which we live.’”

The film grew out of a research project called “Segregated Lexington,” by two Lexington women

who deeply explored Lexington’s racist housing past, from the restrictive deeds that prevented house sales to Black people in numerous neighborhoods, to actual redlining in which banks divided up the city into zones that showed where they could give house loans. Those behind the red lines were denied, and those zones are still apparent today in the East End and Northside.

The two researchers, Rona Roberts and Barbara Sutherland, turned their work over to Lewis and Kristen LaRue Bond, who formed a nonprofit called Black Yarn, which in turn created the film. It looks at the scholarly research on Lexington’s housing segregation, but also focuses in on the personal stories of those affected, and the fact that

BLACK YARN PRESENTS

LEXINGTON
RESILIENCE
THE
REDLINE
THE DOCUMENTARY

FILM SCREENING
WITH PANEL DISCUSSION

📍 Worsham Cinema, Gatton Student Center

📅 Wednesday
February 11, 2026

🕒 6 PM - 9 PM

Panel discussion to follow with the filmmakers Kristen LaRue Bond and Regina M. Lewis, UK professors Dr. Richard Schein and Dr. Derrick White, and moderated by Linda Blackford of the Lexington Herald Leader.

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Black Yarn, Commonwealth Institute for Black Studies

Another screening of the documentary “Lexington: Resilience in the Redline” will be held at UK’s Worsham Theater on Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. The screening will be free and open to the public.

many people are still unaware of how Lexington developed they way it

did. Although there have been sold out screenings

at both the Lyric and the Kentucky Theatre, Black Yarn is still getting requests for more. The next screening will be held at the University of Kentucky’s Worsham Theater on Feb. 11 at 6 p.m., followed by a panel moderated by yours truly (I was also interviewed briefly in the film). The panel will be made up of Lewis, Bond, and UK professors Derrick White and Rich Schein.

It’s free and open to students and the public.

The screening is being sponsored by the UK’s Commonwealth Institute of Black Studies, the UK College of Arts and Sciences, Transformative Colors (a student-led social justice organization), and the Lexington Herald-Leader.

“We thought it was important for CIBS to co-host this event because the film brings rigorous academic research in Black Studies to the community in an engaging, compelling way,” said Anastasia Curwood, a history pro-

fessor and director of the Commonwealth Institute. “Members of our scholarly community lent their extensive expertise to the making of this film, and we are proud of the impact it is making in our city. We want to host a screening and discussion on campus so that our students have the opportunity for learning from Lexington itself, as well as from their courses on campus.”

“Resilience in the Redline” has already been nominated for best documentary at the International Indie Film Fest.

But it’s only a start for Black Yarn, which wants to keep doing research and projects about housing, education and health care in the community. Next fall, they are planning a community summit to look at all the different issues that need further examination.

“Housing connects to everything else,” Lewis said. “We care about all stories, because they are all connected.”