

Chris O'Brien

From: Joslin Leasca <joslinleasca1@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 23, 2024 11:52 AM
To: House Finance Committee; Rep. McEntee, Carol Hagan; Rep. Fogarty, Kathleen A.; Rep. Tanzi, Teresa A.
Subject: Oppose Bill H-8183

Subject: Opposition to House Bill 8183 – Hotel Tax on Short Term Rentals

Dear Representatives of the House Finance Committee and Representatives McEntee, Fogarty and Tanzi:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 8183, which proposes imposing a hotel tax on short term rentals. As a single-home housing provider, I have significant concerns about the financial damage this bill would cause to older, mom-and-pop housing providers like myself and my husband, who rely on income from short term rentals to sustain our standard of living.

Many of us in South Kingstown have carefully planned our financial futures around the income generated from our properties. Imposing a hotel tax on these short term rentals would create an undue financial burden, potentially jeopardizing our ability to maintain our homes and meet our basic needs. For older individuals, this income is often essential, providing a safety net that supports our independence and well-being.

Furthermore, short term renters play a vital role in supporting the local economy and essential services in Rhode Island. A significant portion of our renters are traveling medical personnel who are dearly needed to provide care for Rhode Islanders. These professionals often rely on short term housing options during their temporary assignments, and any increase in costs could deter them from coming to our state, thereby impacting the healthcare services available to our residents.

In addition, transient workers at the University of Rhode Island and summer students who staff local businesses depend on affordable short term rental options. These individuals are crucial for the functioning and growth of our local economy, particularly in South County, where tourism is a significant industry. The additional tax burden could lead to higher rental costs, making it less attractive for these key contributors to choose Rhode Island and South Kingstown as their destination.

The ripple effects of this bill would not only harm individual housing providers but also have a broader negative impact on our community. It is essential to consider the unintended consequences that could arise from this well-meaning but ultimately detrimental legislation.

I urge you to reconsider the implications of House Bill 8183 and vote against it. By doing so, you will help protect the financial stability of small housing providers and ensure that Rhode Island remains an attractive and affordable place for essential workers, students, and tourists.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Joslin B. Leasca
joslinleasca1@gmail.com
(401) 742 6967