

Dear Chairman Casey:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Short Term Rental Association, I write in opposition to H8182.

First, we firmly believe that the House Commission to Study the Effects of Short Term Rentals should conclude its work before any meaningful legislation is passed this year. We are honored to have representation on this commission and it has been highly informative and collaborative, but much more work is required to affect meaningful reform.

We are in full support of extending this important study commission, and believe it has been extremely important in providing education on data around short term rentals in Rhode Island, clarification of issues, and defining current legislation on short term rentals in our state.

H8182 is a bill that is presented as "clarifying registration requirements", however further review of the amendments in this bill show that it will do much more than that. It would allow cities and towns to issue licenses, regulations, and fees on short term rental properties. As we have not yet concluded the STR study commission, we stand firm in our belief that no meaningful legislation (especially with regard to regulations) should be passed before the work of the study commission has concluded.

It's important that members of the House Committee on Municipal Government & Housing understand that many of these STR homes have been in families for generations. They are rented on average just 40 nights per year and generate an average income of \$15,000 annually for these homeowners. It is crucial to preserve and protect the current rights we have as homeowners in Rhode Island.

There are approximately 5,000 STRs registered with the state, approximately 600-800 of those are simply a room in an otherwise occupied house. Additionally, there are hundreds of hotel rooms and entire hotels registered with the state as short term rentals.

If you consider that there are approximately 480,000 housing units in R.I., entire home STRs make up less than one percent of available housing. Many of these entire homes are primary residences that are rented out for just a small part of the year.

The work of the current study commission is extremely important, and will provide the necessary tools for legislators to shape new laws or amend existing ones if appropriate.

We urge you to delay any new legislation until the House Commission concludes its work.

Thank you.

Greer Gagnier  
Executive Director  
RISTRA