



**Testimony of Kelly Fay, Public Policy, Airbnb**  
**Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying**  
**Land Use Regulations and Short-term Rentals in Maine**

Airbnb continues to appreciate the opportunity to be included and speak on behalf of our incredible Host community.

As you know, tourism has long been a vital part of Maine's economy, supporting families and jobs throughout the state and leading to its designation of Vacationland. [According to the Maine office of Tourism](#), direct tourism expenditures in 2021 totaled over \$7.8 billion, with an overall economic impact of over \$14 billion and 143,100 jobs supported by tourism.

Our Host community is proud to be part of this long-standing tradition of welcoming visitors to the Pine Tree state, allowing them to experience the unique communities and incredible coastline it has to offer, all while supporting the businesses and attractions that support residents and their families. The vast majority of these Hosts are everyday individuals and families who occasionally engage in STR to pay for their mortgage, medicine, and student loans, or save money for retirement or a rainy day.

- A typical Host in Maine earns approximately \$8,500 a year
- A typical entire home listing in Maine rented approximately 40 nights a year
- As self reported, approximately 65 percent of Maine Hosts are women
- As self reported, approximately one-third of Maine hosts are aged 60+

Many in our community turned to Hosting in the last several years to help offset rising cost of living, or the financial stresses brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. In a recent survey of our Host community in Maine;

- 42 percent of Maine Hosts say the money they earned through Airbnb in the last year helped them stay in their home
- 41 percent of Hosts say the money they've earned through Airbnb has allowed them to cover food or the rising cost of living

Airbnb is also proud of the role our platform can play in providing much needed housing flexibility and supplemental income to those who serve their communities. In November of 2021, [we announced a partnership](#) with [Boots2Roots](#) – which supports transition planning for active duty military members in Maine – and [Live and Work in](#)

Maine to assist active service members in the state in tapping into the financial empowerment Hosting can offer. According to a survey of our Host community in the state;

- 15 percent of Hosts have a veteran in their household
- 23 percent of Hosts have a healthcare worker or first responder in their household
- 14 percent of Hosts have someone who works in education in their household

Airbnb also recognizes that respecting neighbors and neighborhoods is crucial in ensuring home sharing is working for all members of the community where it operates. In fact, one of the reasons for the success of Airbnb has been our investments in innovative tools to protect hosts, guests, and neighbors. Among these are the following:

- **Neighborhood Support Line:** Providing direct access for guests, hosts, and the communities in which we operate is critical to trust on our platform. This hotline has proven to be an important tool in our efforts to combat unauthorized gatherings and enforce [our ban on party houses](#). **The number is (855) 635-7754.**
- **Law Enforcement Portal:** In 2019, Airbnb established our Law Enforcement Portal, which provides a secure channel for law enforcement to submit valid legal requests for information, track requests and receive updates. To create an account and submit a request, please visit [www.airbnb.com/lert](http://www.airbnb.com/lert).
- **Global Ban on Parties:** Our policies [ban parties](#) in our listings.
- **Community Integrity Program:** Last year, Airbnb launched a partnership with VRBO to further address the challenge of disruptive party houses that are repeatedly reported. Vrbo's [Stay Neighborly](#) and Airbnb's [Neighborhood Support Line](#) allow community leaders, neighbors and hosts to elevate issues related to alleged nuisance listings. [The Community Integrity Program](#) allows Airbnb and Vrbo to work through trusted third-party intermediaries to develop a process that helps identify properties that have been permanently removed from each platform due to repeated violations of respective community policies. The listing identity will be available for each company to take the appropriate action.
- **Risk Detection Tools:** Safety-focused technology that restricts certain reservations based on risk factors -- including reservation attempts for certain

local, entire home listings made by guests under the age of 25. This technology is aimed at trying to prevent unauthorized parties and has blocked thousands of distinct reservation attempts in the US. We've also extended our [policy of blocking certain stays during certain holiday weekends](#), including the upcoming July 4 weekend.

We look forward to continuing to work alongside the state and its localities to ensure home sharing remains a valuable tool for its residents, and to work towards reasonable regulations that will protect and empower all stakeholders.

Thank you for your time.