

Beth Damian
Scarborough
LD 1893

Testimony IN OPPOSITION to LD 1893

AN ACT TO ALLOW A MUNICIPALITY TO IMPOSE A FEE ON SHORT-TERM
RENTALS

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THAT MUNICIPALITY

Testimony IN OPPOSITION to LD 1893

My name is Beth Damian, and I am a resident of Saco, Maine. I have worked in hospitality in the lodging industry for the past 40 years. 5 years ago, my husband and I invested in a property in Scarborough, Maine that we transformed for our future retirement home and to also live there off and on to enjoy it ourselves until we can retire. My dream job has always been to work for myself doing what I love.

Welcoming friends and families to our beautiful state and helping them to enjoy themselves at our local markets, restaurants, shops, museums, lighthouses, beaches, activities, fairs and everything local. We have been renting our vacation home in Scarborough to the delight of our guests for the past 5 years. After a couple of years doing everything while also working a full time job, I was able to leave that job and to focus on my vacation home rental. This is now my only work to earn a living. I'm already paying 9% lodging tax, and personal tax on income while also paying property taxes, and investing in enhancing my rental home in efforts to attract the best guests.

What this LD does, and others before it, is to allow a community to impose an additional tax, which may result in a customer going to a different town where they would not pay

this elevated tax. We understand it is subject to a vote in a municipality and the referendum question can indicate what that rate of the local option tax can be. It may be

that some residents, for whatever reasons, want to limit or severely restrict short-term rentals, and this can be a vehicle to achieve that goal. But we would ask you to consider

whether this is fair to the property owners who in many instances are making a living or additional income.

Please don't compromise my local livelihood. I manage a safe, clean vacation home that I'm proud of being able to offer to guests. I am available for any questions you may have.

Beth Damian
Saco, Maine