

Mary Galperin
Bar Harbor
LD 746

I am a resident of Bar Harbor. As more and more visitors have descended on our community, local lodging establishments have prospered and the great State of Maine has collected a 9% lodging tax and substantial sales tax revenue. However, local residents have not prospered. In fact, it has proven a financial hardship. We have experienced ever increasing property taxes to support the infrastructure needed to accommodate tourism. In addition, local residents have felt the impact of over crowded streets without any compensation.

Per WalletHub.com, the State of Maine ranks first in the percentage of income needed to pay real estate taxes. If our Town could elect to impose a modest 2% local option lodging tax, it could be used to off set our high real estate taxes. Local residents would finally see some personal value in hosting tourism. We could share in the financial gain experienced by local entrepreneurs and the State of Maine. The Maine State Legislature could help balance the scales by allowing it's local citizens to derive a benefit from the tourism industry to offset our economic hardship and the over crowding in our streets.

In addition to local residents prospering, Bill #746 is structured to share 10% of the local option lodging tax with rural communities through out the State to fund rural housing needs.

For these reasons, I urge the Maine State Legislature to approve the local option lodging tax presented in Bill #746.