

Dana Johnson
Biddeford Pool
LD 1181

Hello, my name is Dana Johnson and I am the owner of Maine Seaside Rentals out of Biddeford Pool. I am writing to let you know that I strongly oppose the bill LD1181, which would allow municipalities to require assessors to classify short-term rental (STR) units as either "commercial" or "residential" for tax purposes. This bill risks undermining the economic and community benefits that independent short-term rentals bring to Maine's towns and cities.

My business helps over 75 homeowners in my local area rent out their homes. We rent both short term in the summer and longer winter rentals. We help people in our area have a place to stay while they are in school or working locally or we bring people to the area to vacation and enjoy our great state.

Last season we had almost 500 reservations. It was more than we have seen since pre-Covid. That is almost 500 families from out of state and the country that came to Maine and supported our local economy. They travel to local towns like Biddeford, Kennebunkport, Saco and Portland and spend money in our shops and restaurants. They help keep our local businesses afloat. The state of Maine depends on tourism.

My business also helps homeowners afford to pay their taxes, helps with property management, and afford their homes. A lot of them inherited their homes and want to share the Maine experience with others. We are creating memories for these families and this bill could take that away. Classifying a STR as commercial or residential could cost my homeowners more money and possibly create a situation where they cannot afford the home anymore.

STRs generate revenues not only for the homeowner and my small business, but also the state. All our renters pay the 9% sales tax, which directly supports the states finances.

STRs are critical to Maines economy, its development, tourism, and small businesses like mine.

My business employees four women, has 21 independent cleaners we hire from this area, and about 7 other staff during the summer season, we also help local electricians, plumbers, handymen, and other tradesmen in our area with work from our homeowners.

Short term rentals help promote my area, employee people, promote Maine, bring in tourists and greatly help our local and state economy.

I strongly urge you to vote against this bill.