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Kennebunk

I live in Kennebunk and own a short-term rental in Kennebunkport, Maine. I write in support of legislation to prohibit municipalities from prohibiting short-term rentals.

Such blanket bans abridge personal property rights, harm our tourism industry, and unfairly scapegoat short-term rental owners as culprits for longstanding, multifactorial issues such as housing affordability.

Most of my renters are short-term guests. I am pleased to welcome them into my home and share the gifts of our wonderful community. These guests support our local economy and businesses and provide me with important supplemental income to help pay my mortgage and taxes (including the Maine Lodging Tax), and maintain my property.

Most guests find my home through the popular online home-sharing platforms, AirBNB and VRBO. These platforms expand rental choices for tourists and attract year-round visitors who value the comforts of a well-appointed home for their stay in our community.

It gives me great satisfaction to know that a guest in my home will likely shop and dine in our local businesses. Especially during the pandemic with the loss of so much tourism revenue, Maine should encourage, rather than discourage, this type of commerce.

As a considerate host/owner, I am mindful of my immediate neighbors and recognize the importance of maintaining my home as a quiet, safe dwelling with respectful guests. I comply with all local occupancy and safety ordinances as do the overwhelming majority of rental hosts. We are incited to do so because we are inviting guests into our most valuable asset--our home.

In my experience, hosts welcome collaborative engagement with local lawmakers to ensure reasonable oversight of rental activities and compliance with local statutes. But no town should have the authority to enact a complete ban on short-term rentals.

I support LD 1365 as an important protection for the rights of short-term rental owners. Thank you.