



Testimony in Support of LD 1365: “[An Act To Prohibit Municipalities from Prohibiting Short-term Rentals](#)”

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack, and the distinguished members of the Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Nick Murray and I serve as policy analyst for Maine Policy Institute, a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that advocates for individual liberty and economic freedom in Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on LD 1365.

Limiting or restricting the use of short-term rentals, absent articulable concern for public health and safety, is unnecessary. This kind of regulation suppresses the entrepreneurial spirit of individuals who want to generate supplemental income by using their property to do so.

The short-term rental market has provided benefits to all sorts of everyday Mainers. When people are struggling to make ends meet, few sustainable options are available, usually confined to finding another job or cutting extraneous expenses.

Fortunately, in recent years, running a short-term rental has allowed thousands more people to earn extra income for their families. A vibrant short-term rental market also supports tourists and visitors to Maine, who prefer to find a place to stay that is different or cheaper than a mainstream hotel room.

These are voluntary, mutually-beneficial agreements negotiated by people exercising their choices. These are win-win situations into which politicians have no business unnecessarily inserting themselves.

To be clear, we are not suggesting that municipalities cannot reasonably regulate short-term rentals; we are most concerned with their outright prohibition, the unintended consequences of such bans, and the subsequent erosion of the private property rights of Mainers.

Some Mainers are already subject to onerous restrictions and prohibitions on short-term rentals on the local level.¹ Government should not dictate what individuals can or cannot do with their homes or property as long as public health and safety are not a factor. Our view on this is consistent, no matter what level of government. Towns and

¹ [New ordinance diminishes the rights of property owners in South Portland](#) | The Maine Wire

cities, as well as the state, can do much to restrict individual liberty to unacceptable degrees.

We believe it is the state's obligation to protect property rights and prohibit municipalities from banning short-term rentals. Proponents of short-term rental bans will surely cite Airbnb as the primary reason why they want these prohibitions. However, there are other operations, large and small, in addition to Airbnb, that are directly impacted by such bans and are often forgotten during these debates.

Please deem LD 1365 "Ought Not To Pass" and protect property owners from this kind of aggressive and misguided local policy. Thank you for your time and consideration.