

Doc Wallace  
Rockport

As a member of Rockport Homeowners United, I have studied the impact of short-term rentals (STR) extensively for over a year. Rockport, as with many towns in Maine, has high property taxes. Many STR owners rely on the modest income from rents to offset the impact of property taxes. We have owners who would lose their homes without this support. Further, STRs are good for the tourism business. A majority of Rockport businesses signed a corporate letter stipulating the positive impact that STR tourism brings to their success. STRs offer a very different lodging experience than that offered by motels and hotels. They appeal to a low to middle income clientele who are looking for a more intimate, personal resident experience aided by a daily, quasi-concierge relationship with the host. As STR hosts, we have had the rewarding experience of having some of our prior guests purchase homes here in Rockport following their stay with us. Our guests pay the full state lodging taxes. Typical of our homey, residential clientele, they are respectful of property and safe in behavior - attested by a two-year report from the Rockport Police showing not a single STR-related complaint. In summary, STRs provide a valuable tourism experience and are operated by caring homeowners who depend on the income to successfully live in Maine. The State should not allow any of its constituent towns to prohibit the mutual success brought about by STRs. ... Thank you.