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PORTLAND

I appreciate everyone's time and willingness to come together over this issue. Short term rentals are not new to Maine and as the vacation state we have a long history with them. STRs are used to keep out of state money right here in our towns, and help locals pay taxes and maintain their properties. They're used to provide an opportunity for tourists to bring their family together at the lake, or for a couple to getaway to a town that doesn't have some large hotel conglomerate.

In Portland though, they've most recently been used by select councilors and political organizations as a scapegoat for larger issues that they've chosen to ignore. They've been used there as a way to gouge the few remaining hosts out of money in an attempt to charge a tax without calling it that by name. In Portland, if you were to rent out 5 bedrooms in a house, you would be charged \$7,700 per year in registration fees.

This has gotten out of control and we've lost perspective on what short term rentals are. They are local people running small businesses for what is often a few months out of the year. Many of these places then go back to being used for students, traveling nurses and doctors, or other people looking for 3 season rentals. STRs shouldn't be used as a way to steal from your citizens and they shouldn't be used as a scapegoat for a lack of foresight in other areas. Again, I appreciate everyone's time and hope that you do the right thing and limit the strangling regulations put in place by a few people in many Maine towns.