



TOWNSHIP

April 30, 2019

Hon. James Lower, Chair
Local Government and Municipal Finance Committee
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representative Lower and Committee Members:

I would like to express my opposition to House Bill 4046 (including proposed substitute H-1) which largely prohibits local municipalities from regulating short-term rental of residential property using their zoning authority. The proposed legislation imposes a “one size fits all” solution on all local governments in the State, regardless of the location or character of the community and its neighborhoods.

The demand for and supply of short-term rental housing varies tremendously in communities across the state – from national tourism destinations to rural townships and villages with little or no tourism activity.

In communities with low demand for short-term lodging in relation to the total housing supply, a “permitted use by right” approach to regulating short-term rentals may be an appropriate means of allowing the occasional use of homes for short-term rental use, without disrupting neighborhoods.

In areas where demand for short-term lodging is high in relation to housing supply, such as many of our waterfront communities and other tourism destinations, left unregulated, short-term rental use of residential properties may overrun neighborhoods, disrupt the quality of life for nearby residents, and lower the supply of housing available for permanent residents.

Local governments, through their appointed Planning Commissions and elected officials, are best suited to make decisions as to whether and how to accommodate the growing residential short-term rental market. In the community I serve as Planning Director, we have devoted many months deliberating how short-term rental use should be regulated. We have sought input from local residents, including those who wish to participate in the short-term rental industry, with the goal of developing reasonable rules that protect the integrity of neighborhoods while allowing short-term rental use.

The carefully-crafted rules concerning short-term rental use that are developed by local governments to meet their unique needs and circumstances are certain to produce better solutions than a State-mandate applied to the entire State.

Sincerely,

James E. Ferro, AICP
Planning Director

Cc: Angie Lake, Committee Clerk

