



**Testimony in Opposition to SB 104
Senate Local Government Committee
March 12, 2025**

Chairwoman O'Brien and esteemed members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony regarding Senate Bill 104. My name is Keith Benjamin, and I serve as Mayor of the Village of Bratenahl.

Senate Bill 104 would unduly restrict our local government's ability to regulate short-term rentals—a vital tool for preserving the quality and character of our community. Local officials are uniquely positioned to make decisions that reflect the needs and values of our residents, and stripping away that authority undermines our commitment to maintaining safe, livable neighborhoods.

We have witnessed how unregulated short-term rentals can disrupt communities. In many instances, these properties operate similarly to hotels, contributing to excessive noise, parking shortages, and other disturbances that diminish our residents' quality of life. More concerning, however, are the nuisance disturbances that escalate into criminal activity, which has been documented not only in Ohio, but throughout the country.

For example, in parts of Los Angeles, unregulated rentals have frequently been used as venues for large, unsanctioned parties that lead to vandalism, theft, and other criminal behaviors. Similarly, in New Orleans, there have been instances where unauthorized parties in short-term rental properties escalated into violent altercations, jeopardizing public safety.

Importantly, similar patterns are emerging here in Ohio. In Cleveland, local officials have reported numerous complaints about short-term rentals serving as hotspots for unauthorized parties. These incidents have led to property damage, confrontations, and even violent altercations that strain our law enforcement resources. Such examples clearly underscore the risks associated with ceding local control over rental regulation.

Our community, like many others, depends on its local government to manage zoning and land use—including the oversight of short-term rentals—in a manner that safeguards both the character and safety of our neighborhoods. Removing this regulatory power not only erodes municipal home rule but also imperils our ability to respond effectively to these pressing concerns.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reject SB 104. Retaining local authority is essential for addressing the disruptive impacts of unregulated short-term rentals and ensuring our community continues to thrive. I appreciate your time and consideration and welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Keith Benjamin", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Keith Ari Benjamin, Mayor

