

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

Good afternoon, Chairwoman O'Brien and Members of the Committee. My name is Paul A. Koomar, Mayor of Bay Village.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 104. We appreciate your time and consideration on this important matter.

I oppose SB 104 because it will devalue neighboring properties, circumvents the zoning process that everyone else has to follow, and allow absentee landlords to conduct business with no accountability to the local community.

The City of Bay Village has had many negative experiences with short-term rentals. One example occurred in 2019. The owner of a large house on the lakefront, an absentee landlord who lived in Chicago, rented the house for a few days to a group of individuals she did not know through an online rental platform. Close to 500 people showed up for a birthday party at this house on October 5, 2019. Cars were parked in neighbor's yards and on all of the side streets. There was public urination, loud noise, disruptive behavior, and a huge traffic jam. Police from multiple communities as well as the Ohio State Patrol had to respond to this party due to the huge volume of people and complaints. The owner had no one on-site to oversee these tenants in any way. There was no one to clean up after them, and no one to ensure that any rules she may have had were enforced. The neighbors and the community were forced to absorb the cost of this giant party. As a result of the debacle, the City of Bay Village passed a law prohibiting rentals for less than 29 days in the city.

These short-term rentals turn residential homes suddenly into hotels and motels but without the normal zoning process. Bay Village is 97 percent residential and not zoned for hotels or motels. Almost all of our properties are single family residences. In Bay Village, in order to change the zoning and permit hotels, voter approval in the entire city and in the ward where the property is located must be obtained at a general election. When someone buys a home in Bay Village, they do not expect to live next to a hotel or motel, but this is exactly what can happen, literally overnight, without regulation of short-term rentals.

Permitting unregulated short-term rentals circumvents this right of the voters to decide if a motel can be in their neighborhood and while it may allow an absentee landlord to make a few dollars off of their house, it devalues the adjoining property owners' homes and creates an infringement on their property rights.



The City of Bay Village is not against rentals. As I mentioned, we have ordinances that clearly allow rentals, and a rental inspection process, as well as a registration fee to help pay for the inspections to make sure the properties are safe, clean, and habitable. Longer-term rentals do not encourage transient residency, provide some commitment to the community and can be regulated. SB 104 removes regulation for the properties most in need of regulation.

The issues of zoning, out of control tenants, absentee landlords, and the lack of local accountability are a bad combination that unfortunately requires municipalities to regulate short-term rentals to ensure the value of the neighboring single-family properties remains high, and to protect the property rights of the neighboring homes.

What works in one town may not work in another town, and that's why I do not support Senate Bill 104, as each community should be able to decide what is best for its residents rather than having "one size fits all" legislation. We respectfully urge the committee to reject SB 104 to ensure that local governments retain the tools necessary to address these pressing concerns. Thank you for your consideration, and I welcome any questions the committee may have.

Paul A. Koomar
Mayor
City of Bay Village, Ohio