



Laurie A. Jadwin
Opponent Testimony – SB 104
March 12, 2025

Chair O'Brien, Vice Chair Gavarone, and members of the Senate Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony with regard to Senate Bill 104. I am Laurie Jadwin, and I have the privilege of serving as the Mayor of the City of Gahanna. I am providing testimony in opposition to the Senate Bill – a proposal that would limit the ability of municipalities like mine to manage their communities in the best interests of their citizens.

Prior to being elected as Mayor five years ago, I served as the Executive Director of Visit Gahanna, our city's local convention and visitors bureau. As such, I understand the economic impact that short term rentals can have on providing attractive lodging options for visitors to our city. My opposition to this bill is not rooted in the viability of short-term rentals within our city, but rather, on the overarching consequences that the bill's wide-sweeping provisions would have on the broader community.

This bill, as written, would prevent local governments from carrying out their critical task of effectively managing and responding to the specific needs and goals of their individual communities. Based on a 2022 study from the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 2,234 cities, towns, and villages in the State of Ohio. No two jurisdictions are the same, as each city, town and village is unique in its demographics, resources, and the needs and challenges of its constituents. The issues and challenges in a community such as Buckeye Lake – where vacation homes and summer rentals are a prominent feature of the local economy – are vastly different than the issues and concerns of the residents of Gahanna.

Local governments, at their very core, are responsible for responding to the issues and challenges of our constituents, and a rigid, one-size-fits-all solution does not allow us the flexibility to respond to local concerns effectively. Municipalities need the authority to manage in ways that prioritize the needs of our residents and uphold the integrity of our communities. For instance, Gahanna does not currently have specific regulations for short-term rentals because our community has not identified an immediate need for such regulations. However, this bill would limit any ability for us to respond to changing dynamics in our local neighborhoods and address issues as they arise.

Additionally, the bill under consideration is directly contrary to the essential tenets of zoning laws. By definition, zoning codes exist to govern how land can and should be used to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, to ensure orderly and predictable growth, and to mitigate the potential impacts of different types of land uses on the surrounding community. As an example, residential areas are often zoned differently than commercial and industrial areas to minimize the disruption caused by noise, traffic, or other factors. By restricting a local government's ability to manage land use in its community, this bill not only would grant short-term rentals carte blanche to operate in virtually any zoning district of their choosing, but also would disregard the very principles of land use planning that zoning laws are



designed to uphold, as well as weaken the ability of municipalities to plan for the long-term health and sustainability of their communities.

As a mayor with a deep-rooted passion for building thriving communities, I have come to see my role as more than just governance – it is about shaping a place where people truly feel at home. My background and experience has taught me that a city is more than its streets and its buildings; it is the heartbeat of its people, the dreams they chase, and the connections they forge.

That is why I am committed to striking a balance – ensuring that private landlords have the ability to grow our economy while also recognizing that our residents deserve the freedom to choose not just a house, but a *community* where they feel safe, supported, and empowered. A community is about the neighbors who watch out for each other, the parents who walk their children to school hand in hand, and the small business owners whose livelihoods depend on strong, vibrant neighborhoods.

Municipalities have been granted authority under the Ohio Constitution to manage their cities in a way that best serves their residents. Proposed Senate Bill 104 undermines that authority and instead proffers an inflexible solution to an issue that is best handled by those with the most visibility into what is happening in their communities. I urge you to reconsider this bill and to allow local governments the flexibility they need to regulate short-term rentals in a manner that aligns with the specific needs and interests of their communities. As leaders, we must foster growth in a way that reflects the needs of every constituent – and we must help each other and work collaboratively to build communities that work for *everyone*.