



Mount Vernon

An Innovative Community; Authentically Hometown

Senate Bill 104 Testimony
Interested Party Testimony
March 11, 2025

Chair O'Brien, Vice Chair Gavarone, and members of the Senate Local Government Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 104.

Regarding the provisions spelled out in Senate Bill 104, I would like for the committee to reject this bill, which would pre-empt local regulation of short-term rentals. There are three reasons that I urge you to consider.

First, this measure pre-empts Ohio's home-rule authority, which is embedded in the Ohio Constitution. This leaves no room for self-management of the zoning, revenue streams, and oversight of maintaining our local neighborhoods for either statutory or charter cities and villages.

Second, the problem is that some of the short-term rentals are operating under the radar of the local community. Related to this, there is an assumption that the local community does not possess the ability to collect on the short-term rental taxes, which is not true. Local communities can enforce their own rules if they have the tools to do so.

Finally, rather than strip away our tools to regulate what is good for our community, the State could empower the local citizens to determine what is best for them at the local level. In our case, Mount Vernon is a college town, and we recognize that our needs are entirely different from Kelly's Island, for example. In a similar vein, imagine telling local school boards how to operate. In my mind, this is no different. Just as school boards should retain their right to determine what happens in their school districts, so, too, should municipalities have that right in their cities and villages.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to address this issue with you. If you have any questions or would like to reach out to me, feel free to do so at (740) 393-9517 or email me at mtvmayor@mountvernonohio.org.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew T. Starr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matthew T. Starr, *D.B.A.*
Mayor, City of Mount Vernon



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