

SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

OPPONENT WRITTEN TESTIMONY

SENATE BILL 104

MARCH 11, 2025

Chair O'Brien and members of the Senate Local Government Committee, I am writing to express the City of Oxford's opposition regarding Senate Bill 104 introduced by Senator Brenner which would limit the ability of local governments to regulate short-term rentals. The City of Oxford urges you to consider the implications this bill will have on our community's housing availability, safety, and local regulatory authority.

The City of Oxford is facing a critical shortage of housing for year-round residents. The 2020 Housing Needs Assessment highlights the pressing need for additional housing stock in our community (Oxford Housing Needs Assessment, 2020). The City was heartened to see that the Ohio Senate took up the issue of housing in 2024. Limiting local authority over short-term rentals exacerbates the housing supply problem called out in the April 2024 Senate Report by allowing more housing units to be converted into transient lodging, further reducing the availability of homes for permanent residents.

Oxford is not alone in this challenge. Across the country, small towns and tourist-heavy communities have seen rising short-term rental activity directly impact long-term housing availability and affordability. You may not consider Oxford a tourist community, but we are heavily impacted by visitors coming to Miami University events. Tourism is the second largest driver of our economy.

Evidence in Oxford indicates that conversion of homes into short term rentals, removes a housing option for local workers and families. The City is working hard to add affordable housing stock to the community and does not want to lose the units that we already have. Studies indicate that the conversion of residential properties into short-term rentals drives up rental costs and reduces housing options for local workers and families. The City has no problem with homeowners utilizing the short term rental option for supplementary income to serve our tourists. Communities that have successfully managed this issue have done so through local zoning regulations that ensure short-term rentals remain a secondary use and do not overwhelm the housing market.

The City also has significant concerns regarding safety and the adequacy of regulatory fees to fund necessary inspections. Rental properties, including short-term rentals, must be held to safety standards to protect both guests and the surrounding community. Local

governments need the authority to set permit fees that appropriately cover the cost of periodic safety inspections, ensuring that short-term rental properties comply with fire, health, and building codes. A study by the Urban Land Institute and National League of Cities highlights the importance of rental inspections in maintaining housing safety and quality.

We support the responsible integration of short-term rentals into our community, but local governments must retain the authority to regulate them in a manner that protects housing stock, maintains community integrity, and ensures safety. The City respectfully urges you to oppose SB 104, allowing municipalities like Oxford to set policies that best serve their residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further and share additional insights on how this bill could impact Oxford and other similar communities in Ohio.

Sincerely,

Douglas R. Elliott, Jr

City Manager

City of Oxford, Ohio