

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Dave Stokley, and I'm the co-owner of a short-term rental co-hosting company based in Northern Ohio and the president of the Northern Ohio Short-Term Rental Association. My company, Host Pros, has been in business since 2019, and currently operates about 65 units. We are the only hosts in the state of Ohio to earn over 8,500 reviews while maintaining Superhost status on Airbnb, a status that indicates the quality of our properties and great experiences we provide our guests.

The short-term rental industry has provided us an avenue to create local jobs and support local businesses. In addition to being the primary source of income for me and my business partner, we have four full-time, salaried, local employees with full benefits, and work with over 20 cleaners, whom we pay approximately 2.5x what they would make cleaning for a hotel or cleaning company.

On the business side, Cuyahoga County alone saw an economic impact of \$10.9 Billion from travel and tourism in 2023, generating \$1.5 Billion in tax revenue. As a result, residents saved \$1,380 per household in state and local taxes. These numbers were provided by Destination Cleveland, the local tourism board, which says that short-term rentals are an important option for travelers and a key part of Cleveland's tourism economy. With about 5,000 hotel rooms and 1,500 STRs in Cleveland, they make up a significant portion of the available lodging.

A couple years ago we surveyed our guests, who shared the following:

- 97% of guests said their opinion of Cleveland as a travel destination would be negatively impacted if the city banned or severely restricted STRs.
- 44% of respondents said such ban/restrictions would negatively affect their opinion of the city as a place to live, while 53% said no impact (only 3% said it would enhance their opinion).
- Over 90% said they'd prefer to stay in an STR on their next visit (the remainder said it depends on a variety of factors. Exactly 0 said they'd prefer a hotel).
- 56% of respondents ate 100% of their meals at restaurants. And additional 34% ate 50% or more of their meals at restaurants.
- Respondent demographics skewed younger and educated but were quite diverse.

I have heard arguments that banning short-term rentals will increase the housing supply and create more affordable housing. The data does not support this. In 2023 NYC banned Airbnbs. Since then rent has only continued to rise and vacancy rates haven't changed. The only people that benefited were large multinational hotels, which saw their rates rise at more than 3x the national average. In Cleveland, the roughly 1,500 short-term rentals make up less than 1% of the housing supply. Meanwhile, over 30,000 lots sit vacant.

In addition to all the economic benefits to the community, short-term rentals provide a different type of lodging where families can come together. And contrary to popular belief, having hosted tens of thousands of stays, the overwhelming majority of people are not using them as party houses. I want to share one of my favorite reviews we've ever received, from a family that stayed with us during an

incredibly difficult time. They wrote: “We were in a very vulnerable state of emotion as my daughter was placed in hospice and we booked this unit. We were glad to have this space because she expired at Cleveland Clinic around 4am. This gave us time to prepare a breakfast for my daughter’s husband and family to have it ready when they arrived. Our host was so helpful and understanding of our situation. I would highly recommend this AirBnb to anyone that needs space for a larger number of family members.”

In summary, local bans on STRs remove an important class of lodging options from the market, destroy local jobs and hurt local businesses, and merely shift money from local hosts to large multinational companies, all while doing nothing to improve housing affordability and availability and infringing upon our property rights. For these reasons I urge you to support S.B. 104.

Thank you.