



April 3, 2017

Re: S.204, An Act Relating to the Registration of Short-Term Rentals

Dear Representatives:

We are writing to support S. 204, An Act Relating to the Registration of Short-Term Rentals. Throughout Vermont, property owners that rent short-term often face a patchwork of regulation that changes from community to community or even no regulation at all. Your bill will allow for a basic set of statewide rules that levels the playing field for all short-term vacation rentals.

The Vacation Rental Management Association (VRMA) is a 33-year old international trade association representing professional property managers of traditional short-term vacation rentals, including members in Vermont who have operated since the 1970's. The VRMA supports fair and effective regulations. We agree with the United States Conference of Mayors when they approved a policy which states; "onerous regulations of short-term rentals can drive the industry underground, thus evading local regulations and local hotel taxes".

The rules in S. 204 are easy to follow that would protect property owners' rights by facilitating uniformity for fair competition in the lodging market while providing for the collection of needed taxes that support your communities.

However, we do believe that the self-certification compliance section should be better defined prior to the passage of the bill. Professional property managers take great strides to ensure properties are safe for guests. Managers will be glad to supply supporting documentation and proof, once that is defined. However, the limited parameters around self-certification of compliance does not provide property owners and managers guidance on what will be sufficient to meet the state's requirements.

Additionally, we believe that part of the registration process should include a requirement that home owners notify their insurance company that they are renting short-term or a requirement for proof of insurance on the vacation home/short-term rental property.

The VRMA urges Vermont Representatives to support this legislation. Professional management companies' better serve consumers and communities with a local presence, the requirements you are asking for are already part of what property managers do. Your support of S.204 will help provide increased tax collections, consumer protections and encourage a robust tourism economy.

Sincerely,

Mike Cops
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