

**S.79 and S.210: Short Term Rental Provisions**  
**Senate Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs**

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The Vermont Chamber of Commerce represents 1,200 members statewide, including hundreds of lodging properties. Informed by routine engagement with our membership, Vermont's tourism and hospitality industry, and our partners at American Hotel and Lodging Association, we maintain a knowledgeable perspective on issues impacting the tourism and hospitality industry.

We are supportive of provisions to create a statewide short-term rental (STR) registry. The Legislature has taken progressive actions (most recently Act 10 in 2018) to regulate the STR market in Vermont, and we see a rental registry as the next step in the progression. Establishing the registry is an important step to ensure a safe rental environment.

While STRs contribute positively to Vermont's economy, they operate in a relatively unregulated environment. Registration would be a necessary first step to improve communications and would also provide data if the State chose to enforce health and safety regulations in the future.

Home sharing is not a new concept, it is how the Bed & Breakfast and inn industry began in Vermont. The hospitality industry has always welcomed competition on a level playing field, and the Vermont Chamber has supported the rights of property owners to occasionally rent their homes to earn extra income for up to two weeks without regulations. However, we are now seeing large numbers of STRs that are not occasional renters but unlicensed and unregulated property owners running small to medium sized lodging businesses. This is a policy issue that is not unique to Vermont. For example, Rhode Island has created a new statewide mandatory registration program for STRs listed for rent with hosting platforms.

With anonymity, STRs are afforded an unfair and significant competitive advantage over licensed properties by having no oversight. The foundation set by establishing a STR registry would be a positive step forward to ensure a safe rental environment and move towards equity in the lodging marketplace.

In May of 2020, this committee received a report examining short-term rental regulations and impacts in Vermont. At that time, the data began to show how short-term rentals were affecting housing stock in Vermont. Further examining the issue, the Vermont Future's Project researched Vermont's housing crisis in 2021. Their analysis outlined three key factors contributing to Vermont's chronic housing condition: affordability, availability, and suitability.

There is not one solution to all these problems nor is there one subset of Vermonters that encounter them. Discussions about affordability, availability and suitability need additional emphasis on housing for those in Vermont's current and future workforce.

We appreciate the continued dialogue and efforts to pursue safe overnight accommodations for the traveling public and look forward to remaining a resource.