



Senate Economic Development Committee

Summary of Testimony by Julie Marks

February 14, 2024

RE: Senate Bill 311

In summary, members of the Vermont Short Term Rental Alliance (VTSTRA) are supportive of setting clear and consistent statewide safety standards for short-term rentals so long as they are protective of personal property rights and reasonable and realistic given the nature of the rental activity.

Page 45, Section 40, Short Term Rental Safety Regulation:

We ask that the Committee strike this section for the following reasons:

1. **Short-term rental is a type of rental activity, not a type of property.**
 - a. A short-term rental is an activity that takes place within in residential dwelling. In the same year, Vermont homeowners often: use their home as a private residence, offer a medium-term rental, and generate Meals & Room Tax from short-term renting. Private home rentals are distinct from commercial lodging properties and should be regulated as residential.
2. **There are no on-site employees or areas that are open to the public at a short-term rental.**
 - a. The current “Licensed Lodging Establishment Rule” explicitly applies only to properties were 3 or more “self-catered cottages” are being rented. Short-term rentals fall outside of this scope and definition.
3. **Rules for short-term rental safety & sanitation are established in current statute.**
 - a. The passing of Act 10 assigned rule-making and regulatory authority of short-term rentals to the Department of Public Safety. It’s estblished that short-term rentals, like all rentals in Vermont, are subject to Vermont’s rental housing codes.

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Page 46, Section 41, Education Materials & Complaints:

We support, in theory, the requirement for short-term rental operators to file the existing “Short-Term Rental Health, Safety, and Financial Obligations Form,” but would ask that the **existing paper form be converted into an online submission form** in order to increase compliance while creating a simple digital database of operator contact information.

We support statute that would require online travel agents (OTAs), such as Airbnb, Vrbo, Booking, to send alerts to operators informing them of such filing requirements.

We ask for additional public outreach efforts to further inform vacation rental managers and homeowners of their obligations when short-term renting. VTSTRA remains willing to be an active partner in educating and professionalizing short-term rental operators and is available to assist as needed.

Additional documents are provided, per the request of Committee members, including:

- A fact-sheet of Vermont vacation rental data & community demographics
- Analysis of STR impacts on long-term rental rates (in Canada)
- Analysis of STR impacts on housing (in Maine)