



30 January 2022

Virginia General Assembly Senate Local Government Subcommittee  
Pocahontas Building  
900 East Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for all that you do. Your dedication to Virginia and its citizens is appreciated.

I am writing to you today to urge you to vote **Against Senate Bill No. 602**, which seeks to amend the Code of Virginia § 15.2-983 (Creation of registry for short term rental (STR) of property).

A recent report in the Virginia Pilot Newspaper stated that there is concern "...about how Virginia Beach's laws are affecting long-standing local realty companies..." However, this bill provides more benefit to special interest groups such as, absentee investors like corporations and partnerships, national realtor chains that specialize in and profit from STRs, and companies like Airbnb and VRBO to name a few. While we hear that it is about providing nice vacation and party places for people who don't live here, the motivation is for increased profits for management entities as well as increased tax revenue for the State. This at the expense of citizens who live in popular, well-established neighborhoods.

Unregulated expansion, which is what SB602 does, will (1) create more problems for those citizens who live near or next to an STR, (2) challenge a neighborhood's ability to keep their neighborhood safe for the families that live in their "homes" all the time and, (3) increase nuisance calls and real crime that our already stretched police will have to deal with.

Virginia Beach, like most cities and towns in Virginia, has found that it is challenging to enforce zoning regulations for existing STRs. To be more effective, the City Council just passed regulations to refine the management and operations of STRs on September 7, 2021. These new zoning regulations will have a positive effect on the citizens who live here. It would be wise to let these work and allow refinement over time to meet the needs of local businesses and the citizens of our city.

Croatan, in Virginia Beach, is immediately south of the Resort Tourist District separated by the narrow Rudee Inlet Federal Waterway. It is a unique, small, tightly knit, coastal community lying near major attractions and events which make it attractive and desirable as a place to live. It is also attractive and desirable to potential short-term owners, real estate investors, and property managers. There is a single road for access, narrow streets - most without sidewalks, and no commercial venues. Many of our residents have lived here for at least 10-years and quite a few significantly longer. It is in the true sense of the word, a neighborhood. With approximately 525 single-family homes it is fair to say that an unlimited number of STRs would destroy the neighborhood.

If passed, SB602 simply says that the Virginia State Legislature does not care what the majority of its citizens want or the negative impact resulting. The Croatan Civic League is absolutely opposed to this bill. It would be a disaster for our community, have unintended safety consequences, and will encroach upon the tranquility of all residential neighborhoods in the State of Virginia.

Again, thank you for your dedication to our State and citizens.

Sincerely,



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