

May 6, 2017

State Senator Margaret O'Brien  
State Representative Brant Iden  
[SenMObrien@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:SenMObrien@senate.michigan.gov)  
[brandtiden@house.mi.gov](mailto:brandtiden@house.mi.gov)

Dear Senator O'Brien and Representative Iden,

I am a resident of Texas Township and reside in a home on Crooked Lake. I am writing to express my strong opposition to the two bills proposing Amendments to the Zoning Act, specifically the inclusion of short term rentals in the definition of a residential property (HB 4503 and SB 329). These bills were introduced on April 25, 2017 and sent to committee. As I understand it, these bills were strongly supported, with language proposed by, the Michigan Board of Realtors. My objections are as follows:

- The Board of Realtors has an inherent conflict, and should not be proposing zoning legislation. Their goal is to sell real estate, and should in no way restrict or supersede current zoning definitions set by each municipality or jurisdiction.
- I believe that the State's role in zoning should be to establish basic frameworks within which each municipality or jurisdiction can develop specific guidelines for their particular situation. These bills are, to use a current phrase, extreme over-reach into areas that are very location-specific.
- Areas that are zoned residential are based on the situations that provide for neighborhoods of permanent residents, and may vary from location to location. Historically, this zoning allowed for monthly/yearly rentals, which did not interfere with the general living environment in these zones. As a result, those people or families that bought or built in these zones did so with the understanding that things would not change without **local** oversight and public discourse.
- As a resident of a local Lake, I have a very personal viewpoint regarding short term rentals. The home next store to ours has been used as an AirBnB property, beginning the summer of 2016. It is a small three bedroom, two bath

home and is advertised on AirBnB as "perfect for large gatherings". Predictably, we have seen bachelor and bachelorette parties, up to 13 people, homecoming parties, and new neighbors every two to three days over the course of the summer, significantly lessening our enjoyment of our Lake home, and very likely reducing the value of our property. The owner currently resides in Ohio, so there is no local oversight of the renters. I believe strongly, that AirBnB represents a commercial or business use of the property, and does not comply with the current residential zoning. We purchased our home in 2003, and certainly never intended to live next to a hotel.

- Since the property next door has been rented, I have done extensive research on how short term rentals are being regulated both nationally, and more specifically, in "resort" areas in Michigan. They are wide ranging, from exclusion of all such rentals in Traverse City and St Joseph, to very specific regulations in Saugatuck, South Haven and Grand Haven. Approval of these bills would restrict or nullify all or portions of local legislation and regulations.
- I recognize that owners have rights to the use of their home and property. However, when they buy or build in an area zoned residential, they need to be aware of local zoning and the definition of residential and to respect the rights of the other owners, who expect permanent residents, or long term rentals, not a hotel.

I request that these bills **not** be considered by their respective committees. Should they clear committees, I ask your careful consideration of my comments as a voter in your district. The National and State Boards of Realtors have no business in state legislation, and are self serving in said role.

Sincerely yours,