

## Keep local control of rentals

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

During the last legislative session, Florida Representatives James Grant and Anthony Sabatini proposed HB 987, which included language that renting short-term is a “constitutionally protected property right.” This could have allowed short-term rentals everywhere, including within HOAs and areas zoned single-family.

The proposed bill ultimately did not progress to a final vote by the Legislature. But, we can be pretty sure it will rear its ugly head once again, as it has done the past several years.

Those proposing these investor-owned short-term rental bills are shills for the short-term rental industry. Legislators James Grant and Mike LaRosa have proposed bills to remove local control over short-term rentals in the past and have spoken on behalf of the short-term rental industry at their annual meetings. Conflict of interest, wouldn't you say?

Now, the consequences of allowing investor-owned short-term rentals to run amok are haunting cities that have passed ordinances removing local control. A few examples (I have provided corroborating links to the editor of this newspaper for all statements).

- The Destin Log reported: “An 800-square-foot condo one mile from the city limits (claims to) sleep 99 people. A 14-bedroom house farther away sleeps 54.”

- Stateline, a news-analysis service of the Pew Charitable Trust, found that more Airbnbs in a city meant higher rents for local residents. Short-term rentals diminish workforce housing.

- From a Monterey (California) Herald story: “Small towns are being overrun by short-term rentals and local people have no place to live. People who stay in short-term rentals don't coach Little League or help the elderly.”

- The planning director for the Hawaiian city of Maui told the local paper: “It's a little like whack-a-mole; once we cite an operation and it stops operating, another one pops up somewhere else.”

- The Associated Press reported that five people were murdered in Orinda, California, at an Airbnb where an unauthorized Halloween party drew more than 100 partygoers. The event was promoted on social media as a “mansion party.” Orinda now requires a property owner to stay on property during rental.

- Industry publication Airdna reported in 2015 that the majority of AirBnB rentals were entire houses, not single rooms.

There's a place for investor-owned short-term rentals, but it's not in neighborhoods. Don't let Tallahassee decide what's best for us locally.

**Jan Cullinane, Palm Coast**