



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. MCKEE

July 8, 2021

TO THE HONORABLE, THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE:


In accordance with the provisions of Article IX, Section 14 of the Constitution of the State of Rhode Island and Section 43-1-4 of the Rhode Island General Laws, I transmit, with my disapproval, 2021-S501B – “An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government – Tourism and Development.”

This legislation would require the Department of Business Regulation (DBR) to create and maintain an online registration database for all short-term rental properties that are listed on hosting platforms (STRs). All Rhode Island property owners who rent their property on a short-term basis would be obligated to register with DBR. This registration would be in addition to the existing STR operator registration requirements with the Division of Taxation as well as any city/town registration requirements by local ordinance.

I cannot support this bill because it will create additional burden for property owners. Short-term rental concerns, like other property/land use and small business matters, are most effectively addressed at the municipal level. Our local planning, zoning, and building authorities have the requisite experience and expertise to determine what works (or does not work) for their community. Furthermore, Rhode Island already requires short-term rentals to register with the Division of Taxation, which requirement our neighboring states share, without calling for a second state registration; in both Massachusetts and Connecticut, however, some municipalities also have local registrations and/or restrictions.

We would be happy to work with the municipalities to help identify registration portals that could improve and streamline any existing STR registration process.

Sincerely,


Daniel J. McKee
Governor