



April 29, 2019



RE: House Bill 4046



WELTER'S FOLLY  
- PUTTING GREEN -

To whom it may concern,

In 2010 my wife Johanna and I started Journeyman Distillery in the sleepy town of Three Oaks Michigan. At the time the town was under emergency state management as the town had gone into bankruptcy. The store fronts of Three Oaks were sparse and investment in Three Oaks was minimal.

Journeyman has had success and through the process the town has become healthy again. A major contributing factor to both Journeyman's success and the town of Three Oaks has been the significant investment by those investing in rental and vacation properties. Southwest Michigan is a tourist area and businesses like Journeyman and many others in the area can only succeed when Tourists have a place to reside.

Any laws that would make renting vacation properties more difficult would adversely affect our business, the businesses around, but also the towns of SW Michigan and across the state that rely so heavily on the tourist dollar.

I am writing to urge you to not pass any new laws or regulations that may hurt the influx of tourists coming to Michigan looking to rent properties as there will be an untold economic impact on the state and specifically SW Michigan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Welter".

Bill Welter, Owner Founder Journeyman Distillery



April 28, 2019

David's Delicatessen & Coffee  
30 N Whittaker St  
New Buffalo, MI 49117

To Whom It May Concern:

We own and operate David's Delicatessen & Coffee in New Buffalo, MI. We are a coffee and sandwich shop that serves the community year-round. In our corner of the state we have beautiful beaches and great agriculture and are located just around the lake from Chicago. Our business relies on the influx of visitors each year to grow sustainably. Visitors to our town have some good hotel options, but the vacation rental industry provides more accommodations and great options for longer term stay or large groups. We support legislation that would provide a consistent regulation for vacation rentals across the state. We know there are businesses and towns, like ours, throughout Michigan counting on a healthy tourism industry.

Sincerely,

Emma Brewster  
Joseph Lindsay

Owner/Operators  
David's Delicatessen & Coffee  
davidsdeliandcoffee@gmail.com

# brewster's

## ITALIAN CAFÉ

April 28, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

Brewster's is a small restaurant in downtown New Buffalo. Although we are privileged to have the support of our local residents, we would not survive, let alone thrive, without the visitors that enjoy our town.

It is imperative that visitors to our area continue to be welcomed and accommodated in the vacation rentals in all the surrounding communities. It can not be overstated how much we rely on the influx of guests to our community. Without the vacation rentals, people will not have anywhere to stay and, therefore, will not be here to spend money at Brewster's or the many other restaurants and shops. Quite simply, we will be out of business and our 40 employees will be jobless.

Brewster's will be enjoying our 27<sup>th</sup> season in New Buffalo this year; without the hard work of all the rental agencies and the people they bring to our area this would not be possible. It is crucial to allow vacation rentals to continue. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Maria C. Cleveland  
Owner



Saturday, April 27, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

The Red Arrow Roadhouse is a family owned restaurant, located in Union Pier, Michigan. Our business has been open since 1988. We are situated in a resort area, commonly referred to as Harbor Country. Harbor Country is a popular vacation destination and continues to grow in its popularity due to the location, excellent marketing, and the availability of weekly rentals. In fact, we have seen a significant increase in our business during the summer months due to the number of people visiting the area, not just for the day, but for a week or weekend.

There are several active vacation rental companies here, bringing many tourists to the area, and thus our restaurant. Without these vacation rental clients, our sales would be significantly lower. Any legislation passed by the State of Michigan to prohibit or limit vacation rentals in our area would adversely impact our sales and force us to employ fewer local people.

I strongly urge the State of Michigan to reconsider ANY legislation that would limit vacation rentals and cause economic harm to the local communities and businesses that rely on these rentals for their livelihoods.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Trout".

Jennifer Trout  
Owner  
Red Arrow Roadhouse  
269-369-3988

15710 Red Arrow Highway • Union Pier, Michigan • 49129 • 269-469-3939  
[www.redarrowroadhouse.com](http://www.redarrowroadhouse.com)



15311 Three Oaks Road  
Three Oaks, MI 49128  
269-469-5409  
chamber@harborcountry.org  
harborcountry.org



April 26, 2019

House Local Government Committee  
c/o John Natsis  
Beachtown Vacation Rentals  
10234 Community Hall Rd  
Union Pier, MI 49129

Dear Committee:

Harbor Country has a long history of providing visitors with the quintessential family summer vacation experience, which most often includes a stay at a short-term rental. Over the past few years, Harbor Country has enhanced its position as a year-round destination for vacations, weddings, family reunions and weekend get-aways, in part because of the variety of short-term rental options available.

We encourage the House Local Government Committee to work with members of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce lodging community to ensure that short-term rentals continue to be economic drivers for our area where the main industry is tourism. By working together, we can ensure that Harbor Country remains a premier community to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,

*Cathi Rogers*

Cathi Rogers  
President of the Board

4/24/19

To whom it may concern:

It is our understanding that there are proposals for certain laws to be passed that would impede on vacation rentals in the state of Michigan. Any laws that would make renting vacation properties more difficult would unfortunately adversely affect our business and many other businesses around us.

We are an upscale bar & grill located on the marina harbor in New Buffalo, Michigan. We are located just down the street from the New Buffalo beach as well. Our business relies mostly on seasonal tourists and people from all over that have been spending their summers in this area for years.

We are surrounded by vacation properties, condos and hotels. There are several vacation rental companies that rely on summer seasonal and year round rentals.

Not only do we rely heavily on vacationers and renters, our staff relies on them as well. The restaurant industry is the single largest employer of students in the state of Michigan especially during the summer months. Our entire staff counts on the increased business and revenue that being located in a resort town affords. Many of our staff members are working to pay their way through college as well as supporting their children and families.

We are writing to urge you not to pass any new laws or regulations that may hurt the influx of travelers and tourists who are looking to rent properties in this area which would have an untold negative impact on countless businesses, especially ours.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

The Stray Dog Bar & Grill

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## THE STRAY DOG BAR & GRILL

Tel 269-469-2727  
Fax 269-469-2787

245 N. Whittaker St.  
New Buffalo, MI  
49117

[www.thestraydog.com](http://www.thestraydog.com)  
[jack@thestraydog.com](mailto:jack@thestraydog.com)





4/29/2019

Dear Honorable Representatives:

The Vacation Rental Management Association (VRMA) is a 34-year old international trade association representing professional property managers of traditional short-term vacation rentals, including members located in Michigan. We support your efforts to create a uniform regulatory framework for short-term vacation rentals.

Our members actively seek a regulatory structure at the state and local level to ensure business continuity. However, in many communities across the country, including in Michigan, there becomes a disconnecting patchwork of laws that include confusing permitting schemes, severe limitations on property owners' rights and even outright bans. Opponents and competitors of our industry constantly seek to "level the playing field"; yet severe rules that appear in many communities are not equal to other lodging options or residential homes.

Several of our Michigan members have had extreme difficulty maintaining their long-standing businesses due to the uncertainty of the local markets and the ever-changing rules within communities. A member in Schoolcraft County faced future uncertainty when the local government decided to interpret a seldom-enforced section of zoning code that had been in place since the 1960's. Their interpretation would have banned our member's properties that had been in operation for decades. Another long-standing member, whose family has been in operation for over 30 years, is regularly attending township trustee meetings because several townships continuously change their short-term rental rules at a whim.

In many communities, local officials are opting for requirements that call for owner occupation of the home in order to be a short-term rental. These types of "owner-occupied" rules place a ban on non-owner occupied units, including traditional vacation homes, threatening property rights and driving out the professional management community. Professional vacation rental management companies are a community's first line of defense to enforce local and state regulations. You will find that professional managers have fewer complaints, better consumer safety records and have better upkeep of properties. Placing overly restrictive rules on these companies will only be detrimental to localities who are concerned with consumer and neighborhood protections.

We find that many vacation homeowners in the state are also residents. In addition, many Michigan residents utilize vacation rentals in their own state when they travel. The strict and

**Greg Holcomb**  
Government Relations Director  
Vacation Rental Management Association

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unpredictable rules localities are creating strip away property rights of fellow Michiganders, often based on anecdotes and misrepresentation of information.

Vacation rentals are economic drivers of the local economy and often are a main driver of tourism to an area. Numerous studies show that the vacation rental industry continues to grow because of strong consumer demand. In order to ensure that Michigan stays competitive in the travel and tourism market, there needs to be a level of standardization of rules to protect the vacation rental industry.

The Vacation Rental Management Association and our professional property management members work closely with local governments to find enforceable solutions to the varying aspects of the short-term rental debate. We support H.B. 4046, which will protect the rights of property owners, keep Michigan's tourism economy thriving while still achieving local regulatory goals.

Sincerely,

**Greg Holcomb**  
Government Relations Director  
Vacation Rental Management Association

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## John Natsis

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**From:** John Natsis  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2019 11:16 AM  
**To:** John Natsis  
**Subject:** FW: Rental Info

**From:** A/The Swenks <pamkirkliz@ameritech.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2019 10:05 AM  
**To:** John Natsis <John@beachtownvacations.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Rental Info

So here's our story. We are from Michigan and moved to Chicago more than 25 years ago for a career opportunity. While we love Chicago, we always missed the sandy beaches and warm sunsets of Lake Michigan from years and years spent in Petoskey and Harbor Springs. But it just took too long to get there, and after awhile the family home was sold and we had no place to visit. When we discovered Harbor Country, it was like music to our souls. We began renting there -- not just in the summer, but in the fall and the winter and spring as well. We began to attend annual events, got to know people in the area, became known to shops and restaurateurs by name. It had gotten to the point that we were there so much we thought it made sense to buy. So we did -- and the house was a total mess. It took us more than a year to get it in good order -- using local workers, vendors, retailers and suppliers. When it was done, we tried our hand at vacation rentals. We had built a long relationship with the people we rented from and bought from, and listed our house for vacation rentals with Blue Fish Vacations (now Beach Town Homes) for about 7 years. We were fortunate in that we had a good rental history with people from all over the country who would comment good things about the house -- but great things about the area and all the things that were afforded them. The majority left notes that they would be returning. We got to the point where we wanted to enjoy what the renters did year round and decided to move back to our home state. That took another near year as we once again we worked on the house -- this time with little care about what renter might or might not like :). We invested another \$75K in an addition, an updated bath and new windows, again, using local resources. We moved back about 2 years ago though we both still work with a daily commute to Chicago. We support our local gas stations at a high level!! But also are involved with some community activities when we have time -- and come home to our own slice of heaven each night. Unless we had rented here, we never would have known or experienced this wonderful part of Michigan that we didn't know existed. And because we spent several years of renting here, we knew the area and the benefits and the challenges -- and were able to make an informed move. And by-the-way -- coming back here has saved us a ton of money on gas, taxes, food costs, insurance -- and we can actually live a better life here than we could in Chicago. All because of the first rental of a one bedroom cottage.

