

Sophia Cassam

From: Larry <larrybearg@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 9:19 AM
To: Vacation Rental Comments
Subject: VR comments

[You don't often get email from larrybearg@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am a resident of Orcas and vacation rental owner.

We bought our home on Orcas 10 years ago and in order to stay on the island and pay our mortgage we have vacation rented it for 6 months of each year. We live in it the other 6 months of the year. Without this flexibility, we could not have kept our home or slowly fixed it up so it can eventually be our permanent full-time residence.

We are not wealthy (if we were, we wouldn't be vacation renting at all), so this additional income has allowed us to keep our home.

Limiting vacation rentals will make it even more difficult for middle class families to remain on Orcas island.

The only people here will be either a) the wealthy or b) people who inherited family property.

Speaking from personal experience - we are surrounded by neighbors who inherited their property, never had to pay a mortgage and have no idea what it means to sacrifice to live on this island. Of course, they all oppose vacation rentals, since they do not need additional income to pay a mortgage. That is an elitist NIMBY perspective that does not consider anyone but themselves.

If caps are to be mandated, please choose option C so there is some flexibility in this regard.

More to the point, why not levy a tax on all the homes on the island (30%-40%, I understand) that sit empty 50 weeks a year, to pay for more affordable housing? Those are the people who can afford to not vacation rent and who can afford such a tax as well.

Larry Bearg