



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FVRMA Backs Senate Bill 824 and House Bill 987 in Support of Fair and Equal Lodging Regulation in Florida

Nikki DeVeronica, President of the Florida Vacation Rental Management Association, explains the organization's support of laws that will put the regulation of the vacation rental industry in the hands of the state.

Kissimmee, FL (March 7, 2019) - As the 2019 Legislative Session starts in Tallahassee, we are bombarded every day with stories and opinions about Florida's short-term vacation rental industry. This would not be an issue if almost all of the stories were not one-sided and against the booming industry. Day after day someone writes or speaks against an industry that, quite frankly, helped bring in over 31 billion dollars to the Florida economy in terms of tourism and hospitality. The short-term lodging sector more than did its fair share of breaking the record number of visitors that traveled to the state in 2018.

As current President of the Florida Vacation Rental Management Association (FVRMA), I thought it only right to share my thoughts on the other side of this battle and give a voice to the millions of homeowners who own short-term rentals in our state. The income that this industry provides for them is a means, among many things, to keep their homes, feed their families, put their kids through school and much more. Many of these homeowners also pay an experienced property management company to ensure their homes are licensed and insured properly and that they meet all registrations and safety requirements. Are there people who run a short-term rental improperly? Yes, of course there are, but this is not the norm or the majority as many would like everyone to think. One of the goals of our association is to help make sure that property management companies have the knowledge and tools needed to run their companies correctly and that homeowners who run their own vacation homes do so as well.

Many are given the idea that we are against regulation of the industry, and that could not be further from the truth. What we are against is the overreaching and quite ostentatious and onerous regulations being imposed by local government on a daily basis. Many of these local ordinances serve the sole purpose of driving this industry out and closing its doors for good. On many occasions, we have reached out to local officials to reach a compromise but are hardly ever given the opportunity. Why is this? It is for this reason that we are backing Senate Bill 824 and its companion House Bill 987 and asking that regulation be pre-empted to the state, where we will be treated fairly and equally with other lodging partners statewide.

The few stories of “noise, parking and trash complaints” are exaggerated beyond belief. Why is it that we don’t hear the stories of the families that were able to go on their vacation together because a home provided a way for their whole family to stay together in one place, thus making it more affordable for them to enjoy and make memories? Why are the stories of families with children who have autism or are disabled not mentioned? The reason is because they might tell a tale of an amazing vacation that is only afforded to them through the use of a vacation rental over traditional lodging options.

Why is it that we don’t hear about how the FVRMA is for fair regulation of our industry or how we agree vacation rentals should be registered, licensed and have the proper safety requirements? I will tell you why. It is because others are threatened by our success and want to look past what we provide to families and guests visiting our state and what we truly stand for. We are the largest and most successful state in the U.S. for vacation rentals because we are a hospitality state with many alternatives for lodging.

It has been a long battle that we have fought for many years, and we will continue to advocate and educate. We want nothing more than to work together with our colleagues in this industry to achieve fair regulations, but we cannot stand idly by while local governments continue to ignore and affect the livelihood of so many of us who depend on this industry.

To those of you who own a vacation rental, property management company or business that relies on this industry, now is the time to make your voice heard and for us to stand together. If you are not sure how, reach out to the FVRMA. We will gladly provide the information needed. Together we can make 2019 our year.

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