

"You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich.

You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.

You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift.

You cannot lift the wage earner up by pulling the wage payer down.

You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred.

You cannot build character and courage by taking away people's initiative and independence."

Dear Mayor Orman and Trustees of the Village of Aurora:

As you deliberate—and I hope you do—over passage of the proposed Short Term Rental legislation, I ask that you consider a couple of points. While the intention to preserve housing stock and attract new, young residents to our community may be laudable, penalizing members of our current population to accomplish that is not. The proposal seems targeted and punitive. The folks who have employed family homes as income properties and those who have acquired other homes as investment properties have made substantial investments to bring them up to a high level of modernity and convenience. They are attractive representations of the village's property portfolio. And the fact that they bring many new, and returning, visitors to enjoy Aurora's offerings through the year is a good thing. Better they be occupied on a rotating basis than sit empty till the younger generations of owners can take a week in the summer to return to their family home.

Speaking of attractive and well-maintained elements of a community, what a positive inducement to a prospective young buyer! I invite you to have a drive through some neighboring hamlets whose days of prosperity are well behind them.

You cannot compel or legislate desired outcome. But you can incent it. Think about how that might work.

Given the tourism nature of the local economy, any person considering a purchase would surely ponder how he could turn his property to an income opportunity. Perhaps not a priority for most, the prohibition or limitation contemplated could be a deal breaker for many and could substantially depress property values.

John Locke's inalienable rights were life, liberty and property. Our Declaration modified that, probably because "property" and "slavery" were conflated: life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. Well there is quite a lot of the notion of property in the pursuit of happiness.

In any reasonable change to current practice, unless there are clear threats to health, safety and welfare, existing circumstances are granted grandfather status. I see no threats to the general community welfare from the continuance of short term rentals. In fact, it is more likely commercial activity participants who are disruptive. In any case, that is minor annoyance. But, by the way, what is the reason for two different noise curfews?

Finally, I applaud the work you have contemplated in the DRI and NY Forward initiatives. I hope you score many millions of dollars, which will bring many more in investment match. This is the sort of forward thinking that will positively impact all of us. I do not think that STR as it stands will be anything but a negative.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stephen L. Zabriskie, Resident and Property Owner