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Senate Committee on Business and General Government  
Oregon Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 621, Vacation Rental Dwellings  
Via email: [sbgg.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sbgg.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov)

Dear Chair Riley and Members of the Committee,

Oregon Coast Alliance is an Oregon nonprofit organization whose mission focuses on protecting coastal natural resources and collaborating with coastal residents to enhance community livability.

We write you today in strong opposition to SB 621, which would prohibit local governments from enacting regulations governing vacation rental dwellings, save for license issuance and collection of a registration fee. This bill would rob all local governments of an essential power to regulate community livability. It also directly contradicts a central tenet of Oregon's land use program: that local governments have powers reserved to them to regulate local zoning and housing issues under a statewide framework.

Vacation Rental Dwellings (VRDs) are a serious and growing problem on the coast, especially since the rise and swift expansion of online booking platforms. The coast, for long a frequent vacation destination for Oregonians, is increasingly becoming a vacation rental ghetto. Nearly all towns and unincorporated communities on the coast are, or have recently been, engaged in serious discussion of how best to regulate VRDs, including Newport, Lincoln City, Cannon Beach and Wheeler. There are neighborhoods in coastal

towns that are half or more VRD-occupied. This guts neighborhoods, reduces livability, and ruins the character and quality of towns. It is barely appropriate to speak of a “neighborhood” when 50-80% of the houses are empty save for weekend tenants, who frequently have loud parties, cause traffic and parking problems, and have no investment in, nor interest in, neighborhood quality or character.

Communities are engaged in creative efforts to limit VRD destruction of town quality by limiting the number of nights per week or year that a dwelling may host a short-term rental; limiting VRDs to commercial rather than residential zones; tightening up license requirements, and similar measures. It is vital to city and county governments that they have this ability.

As the 2015 Land Use Board of Appeals holding in Lincoln City (*Oregonians in Action Legal Center vs. City of Lincoln City*) determined, VRDs are not part of “needed housing” under state statutes, nor are they considered housing under the local comprehensive plan. Oregon’s land use system rightly regulates and expects local governments to focus on providing a variety of housing types to suit the local population and visitors. It does not anticipate, nor allow, coastal towns and rural areas to become VRD ghettos. Vacation dwellings negatively affect the overall housing supply, leaving less room for solving one of the most important issues affecting the coast: affordable and workforce housing.

We urge the Committee to consider the terrible ramifications this bill would have on communities, both rural and urban, coastwide, as well as the legitimate sphere of governance of both counties and cities. Please vote No on SB 621.

Thank you,

*/s/ Cameron La Follette*

Cameron La Follette  
Executive Director