TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Business and General Government

FROM: The City of Medford

RE: Opposition to SB 621

DATE: March 3, 2019

The City of Medford respectfully requests your opposition to SB 621, which would prevent communities from regulating short-term rentals.

The City regulates short-term rentals and vacation rentals with a primary concern for livability for full-time residents and housing availability. At the same time, decision about such regulation include consideration of our importance in the tourism economy.

Permanent housing needs have grown in Medford and our regulation of short-term housing helps to assure full-time housing capacity. Our population has grown 8.9% since 2010. We have recently expanded our UGB, are working on infill and zoning changes and continue to break down barriers to building new homes.

In Medford, "transient lodging" means a private residence that is used by members of the general public for temporary human occupancy. Our transient lodging code defines "Transient" as any individual who exercises occupancy or is entitled to occupancy in transient lodging for a period of twenty-seven consecutive calendar days or less, counting portions of paid calendar days as full days. Code also adds that a person who pays for lodging on a monthly basis, irrespective of the number of days in such month, shall not be deemed a transient. This ordinance was adopted in 2004 and updated to address new housing and tourism realities in 2015. Ordinance adoption happens openly and transparently and includes citizen participation. Our transient lodging tax rate is 9%.

You can learn more about Medford tourism and use of the transient lodging tax here: http://oregondmo.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Medford-2016-2017-Annual-Report.pdf

The City of Medford strives to balance policies to provide permanent safe housing where citizens can enjoy living, working and playing while also taking advantage of our growing tourism industry. For that reason, we have concerns about SB 621.