

Senate Local Government & Housing

03/26/2025 Upon Adjournment

HB25-1247 County Lodging Tax Expansion

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Dorelle Ackermann Against themselves</p>	<p>Hello and Thank you for considering my concerns on this bill. I have owned property in Frisco, CO. since 1983 and my motto is "I live in Illinois but my heart is in Colorado".</p> <p>By renting my home I am able to cover approximately 50% of my costs of ownership. I am not getting rich by renting out my home and I am thrilled to be able to share my love of Summit County with others who rent my home. I recognize the challenges for local residents to obtain housing at reasonable costs given the increase in value of homes in Colorado over the years. Since I spend the summers in Frisco, I cannot consider long term rental of my home to locals.</p> <p>Presently, renters pay 15% in taxes and 15% in service fees to stay at my home via VRBO and AirBnB. Short term rentals, like my home, appeal to middle class families who vacation on a budget. In turn, they support small businesses throughout the county and local government without adding to local services such as taxes for schools. I believe further increases in local taxes will price out families wishing to have a memorable Colorado vacation experience because they will easily be paying \$400/night to accommodate a family of 4.</p> <p>Limitations in terms of rental nights, and fees placed on home owners like myself have the potential of crushing the market for vacationing families. If I am not renting my home, the county and state are losing taxes in the amount of 15%. Consider the impact of a real estate crash as well. I lived through the 1980's when that happened.</p> <p>The financial health of Summit County is dependent on tourism. Any additional taxes should be spread out more equitably and not be an added burden on the tourists that already support the community economically. Thank you.</p>
<p>Helen Ragone Against themselves</p>	<p>Dear Members of the House Transportation, Housing & Local Government Committee,</p> <p>My name is Helen Ragone, and I am a short-term rental owner in [Your County, e.g., Summit County], writing</p> <p>to express my strong opposition to House Bill 25-1247, which would allow counties to triple the lodging tax from</p>

	<p>2% to 6%. As someone who relies on my STR to support my family and contribute to Colorado’s tourism economy, I am deeply concerned about the financial strain this bill would place on small operators like me and the questionable need for additional county revenue. I urge you to reconsider this proposal based on the following points, grounded in data and experience from my community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resort counties like Summit already have ample revenue: Summit County’s revenue has TRIPLED since 2013. Far outpacing inflation as measured by CPI... and reaching \$191,776,482 in 2024 (per Colorado Dept. of Local Affairs and Summit County Finance Dept.). With per capita revenues of \$11,002—on par with major U.S. cities like San Francisco—counties like mine should not have revenue issues. • Existing taxes aren’t even being collected properly: Summit County fails to collect its approved 2% lodging tax on many properties due to incorrect tax jurisdiction assignments (e.g., Quandary Village and 39 Degrees North) and lax enforcement on private timeshare rentals, which often evade state, county, and lodging taxes entirely. Why raise taxes when current ones go uncollected? • STRs aren’t the housing crisis culprit: A February 2024 RRC Associates report found STRs were not a major cause of housing price increases from 2018-2022. Prices soared while STR counts remained steady, and areas without STRs (e.g., Denver metro) saw similar spikes. Factors like low interest rates, construction slowdowns, and NIMBYism are the real drivers. • STRs aren’t growing out of control: The same RRC report shows no growth in “active” STR units in Summit County from 2018-2023, debunking claims of unchecked expansion.
<p>Kristine Lee Against themselves</p>	<p>Dear Committee Members,</p> <p>My name is Kristine Lee and I am a proud owner of an STR in Summit county that I designed and built with my husband. I will start by saying we are not the ultra rich that many describe as second home owners here. We have day jobs, kids and normal</p>

	<p>lives like all of you. I am one year into being an airbnb host and I think it's important that you are all aware of the facts and recent observations.</p> <p>One, If the goal is to fund community initiatives, why aren't we taxing the broader tourism industry—No one is coming to my house just because of the house! They are coming for the Ski resorts, retail shops, restaurants, and activities Breckenridge and surrounding areas offer. Why aren't the hotels, time-shares, restaurants and shops who all benefit from tourism get this same tax? Why do STR owners continue to bear a disproportionate burden? In Summit we are also limited to 35 bookings per year yet we are treated like a year round cash cow. When you put this to vote at the county level, the constituents are conditioned to vote in favor as STR's are put in a negative light and we are portrayed as rich, greedy cash cows.</p> <p>Two, Airbnb already charges guests a 14% guest fee, in addition to county and state taxes which brings that up to 18-30% depending on the county. On top of that, STR owners already pay exorbitant county taxes and fees, and a 3% fee to the OTA's. We are pricing people out, including my family who tries to explore Colorado, pushing potential visitors to seek more affordable options elsewhere.</p> <p>Three, we are already seeing a downturn in bookings across the country, with many STR owners reporting significant declines due to inflation and the economy in flux which now includes the looming tariffs going into play now. The recent controversy surrounding Airbnb's co-founder joining Elon Musk's administration has contributed to this trend along with Canada boycotting travel to the U.S. Further taxation will only exacerbate the problem, harming local businesses that rely on tourism spending.</p> <p>Four, This bill represents yet another instance of "passing the buck" onto guests, which ultimately fatigues travelers and disproportionately impacts Front Range locals and other Coloradans—including myself—who seek affordable accommodations within our state.</p> <p>STR owners are already paying more than their fair share in taxes and fees (especially Summit County), yet the local housing crisis remains unresolved.</p> <p>I urge you to vote NO on this bill. Until there is clear evidence that existing funds are being managed effectively and equitably, adding yet another layer of taxation is not the solution.</p> <p>Thank you, Kristine Lee</p>
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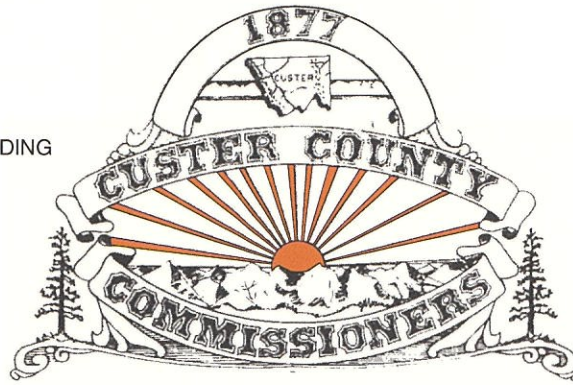
<p>Stefan Thompson</p> <p>Against themselves</p>	<p>As a responsible short-term rental (STR) owner, I am writing to express my opposition to HB1247, which proposes increasing the county lodging tax and expanding the use of these funds. While I support thoughtful regulation and community investment, this bill risks unfairly penalizing law-abiding STR owners while failing to address the ongoing issue of illegal and unlicensed rentals.</p> <p>The current system already disproportionately impacts responsible STR operators. Those of us who comply with local licensing requirements, pay taxes, and follow regulations carry the financial burden while unlicensed operators often avoid both licensing fees and lodging taxes. Unfortunately, enforcement mechanisms in many counties are complaint-driven, which means illegal operators can operate unchecked unless a neighbor reports them.</p> <p>Without robust enforcement to ensure all STR operators are contributing equally, raising the lodging tax will further widen the gap between compliant hosts and those who operate outside the law. This could discourage responsible ownership, reduce transparency, and exacerbate the very problems HB1247 aims to address.</p> <p>I urge lawmakers to focus on strengthening enforcement and creating a fairer, more balanced system before increasing the tax burden on those who are already doing the right thing. Improving compliance first will ensure that any future tax increases are applied equitably and effectively.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I look forward to seeing policies that promote fairness, accountability, and responsible short-term rental ownership in our communities.</p> <p>Sincerely, Stefan Thompson</p>
<p>Myrna Triolo</p> <p>Against themselves</p>	<p>To Our Fellow Members and Concerned Citizens,</p> <p>We are writing to express our unequivocal and resolute opposition to HB25-1247, the County Lodging Tax Expansion Bill, in its entirety. We believe that any form of lodging tax imposes an undue burden on our communities, stifles economic growth, and ultimately harms the very sectors it intends to support.</p> <p>The recent URGENT MEMBER ALERT regarding the accelerated hearing schedule for this bill only underscores the need for immediate and decisive action to stop its advancement. While the rushed timeline limits our ability to fully engage, our fundamental opposition to lodging taxes remains steadfast.</p>

	<p>Our strong opposition to HB25-1247 and any form of lodging tax is based on the following critical reasons:</p> <p>Negative Impact on Tourism and Local Businesses: Lodging taxes directly increase the cost of travel, making our county less attractive to visitors. This can lead to decreased occupancy rates for hotels, motels, and short-term rentals, negatively impacting revenue and potentially leading to job losses within the hospitality sector and related industries.</p> <p>Burden on Travelers and Consumers: These taxes are ultimately paid by visitors, increasing the overall cost of their trip. This can deter budget-conscious travelers and make our region less competitive with areas that do not impose such taxes.</p> <p>Potential for Misallocation of Funds: While proponents often argue that lodging taxes fund specific tourism-related initiatives, there is no guarantee that the revenue generated will be used effectively or in a way that truly benefits the lodging industry or the broader community. These funds can often be diverted to other government priorities.</p> <p>Unfair Targeting of One Sector: Imposing a specific tax on lodging unfairly targets one particular sector of our economy. This creates an uneven playing field and can hinder the growth and investment within the hospitality industry.</p> <p>Economic Disincentive: Increased taxes can act as a disincentive for investment in new lodging facilities or the improvement of existing ones. Businesses may be less likely to expand or upgrade if they face higher costs and potentially lower demand due to increased prices for consumers.</p> <p>Lack of Clear Benefit Proposition: Often, the direct benefits of lodging taxes to the lodging industry itself are unclear or minimal. Businesses are forced to collect and remit these taxes, adding an administrative burden without a guaranteed return that outweighs the added cost to their customers.</p> <p>We firmly believe that fostering a thriving tourism economy requires creating an environment that is welcoming and affordable for visitors. Imposing or expanding lodging taxes works directly against this goal. Instead of adding financial burdens, we should focus on policies that support and encourage growth within our local businesses and attract more visitors through value and positive experiences.</p> <p>Therefore, we urge all members and concerned citizens to take immediate action:</p> <p>Contact members of the Senate Local Government & Housing Committee TODAY to express your strong opposition to HB25-1247 and any form of county lodging tax. Emphasize the negative impacts on tourism, local businesses, and travelers.</p> <p>Register for public testimony via Zoom or in person tomorrow, Wednesday, March 26th, if at all possible, to voice your opposition directly.</p>
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	<p>Send an email version of your testimony using the provided button, clearly stating your opposition to lodging taxes.</p> <p>We must unite against this detrimental legislation and advocate for policies promoting economic growth and a welcoming environment for all. Let our voices be heard loud and clear: Stop the Lodging Tax!</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Myrna Triolo</p>
<p>Matthew Heller Amend themselves</p>	<p>Passage of this house bill will have little or no positive impact for rental housing availability if it includes STR owners who live in their property. Live in STR owners rarely have or want to have legal option for long tenants This bill should be amended to exclude owners who live in their STR property.</p>
<p>Amy Garcia Against themselves</p>	<p>I would like to voice my opposition to this bill. We own 2 rental properties in Summit County. Vacation rentals throughout Colorado are subject to multiple types of sales, excise and lodging taxes plus annual fees and licensing requirements and costs. Just in the past few years, the tax and excise fees have gone up 11%. The expanded uses for the increased lodging tax are outside of the responsibility of visiting guests to Colorado's vacation rental communities and resort destinations. As such, I believe that these categories of allowed uses should receive funding from more broad sources such as uniform sales taxes, rather than a tax that specifically targets vacation rentals. I can assure you that our guests have noticed the increased current tax rate of 19.885%. I realize that Summit County is a sought after destination for skiing and recreation, however, the uses for the increased rates should not be the cost of guests that provide valuable tourist income. Please at least restructure this bill so that any increased taxes, which I don't support, would at least go to affordable housing for people that work to support our tourists. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
<p>Mirtha Bueno-Gonzalez Against themselves</p>	<p>This home fulfilled out dream of home ownership for our family - a middle class family who could have never achieved this dream. By renting it to families like ours who wanted to travel to Summit County; could not afford the hotel rates; and needed a place where they could cook meals and gather.</p> <p>When my husband died in 2020, I almost lost the home because of the lockdowns; but was able to keep it afloat and do necessary repairs, by the Grace of Almighty God.</p> <p>I am a widow, and rent this home to be able to supplement my personal income; which is less than half of what it was while my husband was alive. Renting it fulfills a need in the Summit County area that hotels and resorts are unable to fill, and opens</p>

	<p>up the area to those who could not afford it otherwise; and helps supplement my expenses of the home as well. My renters have never been a nuisance and provide economic benefits to grocery stores; restaurants and other recreational activities that Summit County offer.</p> <p>I provide employment to maintenance workers; cleaning crews; plumbers and others which gives those workers a way to live in the County.</p> <p>If you should wish to speak to me further on this matter, please feel free to reach out at (305) 409-5961.</p> <p>Thanks for your time.</p>
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CUSTER COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
615 ROSITA AVENUE
P. O. BOX 150
WESTCLIFFE, COLORADO 81252
(719) 783-2552
FAX (719) 783-2885



Re: HB25_1247, SUPPORTING

February 26, 2025

To: Members of the House "Transportation, Housing & Local Government" Committee

Today I wish to express whole hearted support of HB25_1247 Lodging Tax Increase, on behalf of the Custer County Workforce Housing Committee. This 9 Seat Committee, sanctioned by the Custer County Board of County Commissioners, is composed of representatives of every governing jurisdiction in Custer County, population 4,700.

In the last decade Westcliffe (pop 500) and Silver Cliff (pop 700) have become popular stop-offs for tourists headed toward Colorado's famous interior destinations. Our location is an ideal layover point with stunning scenery and comfortable amenities.

Unfortunately, the Wet Mountain Valley economy is in real danger of being stunted due to the lack of workforce housing. Critical businesses trying to serve our year-round population and accommodate the pass-thru tourists as well, struggle for manpower due to a lack of affordable housing. Nearly half of the homes in the County are vacation and/or second homes built for a higher income demographic. Today, ownership is out of reach for the essential workforce, like teachers and first responders; zero rentals exist for the 40% - 70% AMI retail and service group.

All our jurisdictions' workforce housing initiatives must be largely funded through, evermore competitive, public grants. An additional 4% on lodging could bring in an estimated \$200,000 annually for local use in matching grants and ancillary costs to stabilize our workforce with an affordable housing market.

Property tax is barely keeping up with essential service costs, which are exacerbated by seasonal tourist demand. This new revenue would be pivotal to sustain healthy pass-thru stop-off locations seeking tourist income historically reserved to our state's famous destinations.

Vibrant small pass-thru towns create a very positive impression of the whole State. The additional 4% Lodging Tax, House Bill HB25_1247 proposes, provides a great opportunity for the 93 million/year tourists to help support a better quality of life for the 6 million residents that live and work here and often serve them invisibly.

Respectfully,
Lucas Epp, Custer County Commissioner
Liaison, Custer County Workforce Housing Committee
Ps 03/18/25

(We acknowledge the reduction from 4% to 3% additional Lodging Tax from L-002. We remain in staunch support of HB25_1247. In Custer County the approx. \$150,000 the 3% would generate is roughly equivalent to 1 mil of property tax)



LOGEPOLE
OVERLOOK

Rich and Beth Mason

Lodgepole Overlook – Carriage House: [Link to Airbnb](#)

104 Lodgepole Cir
Peak 7 Neighborhood
Breckenridge, CO
(c) 303-881-2412



March 26, 2025

Colorado Senate - Local Government & Housing Committee
200 E Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Please Vote "**No**" on **HB25-1247 - Lodging Tax Expansion**

Dear Senate Committee Members,

My name is Rich Mason... and I am a short-term rental owner in Summit County, writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 25-1247, which would allow counties to nearly triple the lodging tax from 2% to 5%. As someone who relies on my STR to support my family and contribute to Colorado's tourism economy, I am deeply concerned about the financial strain this bill would place on small operators like me... and the middle-income guests that I serve with my vacation rental. I **urge** you to consider this proposal based on the points I reference in the linked presentation below, grounded in data and experience from my community. **Please have that presentation handy during public testimony** on the bill as I may reference slides from the deck during my comments or during panel Q&A. I would typically be there in person for testimony... but the last-minute change in schedule finds me traveling for my employer (I have 2 full-time jobs).

[Private Vacation Rental Presentation for 2025 Legislative Session](#)

This is the 7th bill in six years that targets short-term rentals. **We are tired!** Four of those bills, including this one, CIRCUMVENT "[Dillon's Rule](#)". It's a fact that Colorado counties are really an extension of the state. Additional issues with this bill that I don't cover in the presentation deck include the following:

- As mentioned above, this is the 7th bill in 6 years that targets the lodging industry or STRs. **Four of those bills could be considered violations of "Dillon's Rule"**, as they authorized counties to take specific actions against a small group of homeowners. I'm not aware of any other group or industry who has been targeted at this frequency by legislation skirting "Dillon's Rule".
- If a Colorado county REALLY desires these additional regulation and taxing powers... they already have an avenue available to them... **become a "Home Rule" county**. Pitken and Weld counties have already done this... why can't the others?

THANK YOU for your attention to this matter... and vote "No" on HB25-1247. Please help to stop these actions from local government associations so that my family, and others like mine... can get our lives back.

Thank you for your time and considering my request.

Sincerely,

Rich Mason
104 Lodgepole Cir
Peak 7 Neighborhood
Summit County
Phone: 303-881-2412