

RESOLUTION 17-83

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY
OF PANAMA CITY BEACH URGING THE DEFEAT OF
HB 425 & SB 188.**

WITNESSETH

WHEREAS, tourism is a major industry in Florida, and

WHEREAS, it has been reported by economists that the economy of Bay County, Florida, is more dependent upon tourism than all or almost all of the counties in the State; and

WHEREAS, the overwhelming majority of the tourist economy in Bay County is located on Panama City Beach, and tourism is the most significant industry in the City of Panama City Beach; and

WHEREAS, as a result of these facts, the members of the City Council of the City of Panama City Beach are uniquely qualified to express opinions upon matters relating to tourism; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature is considering HB 425 and SB 188 which restricts the ability of local government to regulate vacation rentals by owners and the similar, shared lodging industry (here for convenience collectively "VRBO").

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Panama City Beach:

1. That VRBO is an outgrowth of the internet revolution and is a valuable and desirable component of the modern vacation and tourist driven economy, but as such it is far more anonymous and involves far less personal contact between the modern, digital "inn-keeper" and the vacationing tourist than did traditional, transient accommodations.

2. That the lack of the property owner's control over the rental and the resulting independence of the VRBO customer can lead to activities and situations which disturb not only residents but also other visitors.

3. That these disturbances are typically minor, but are varied, frequent and recurring, and over time could diminish the reputation of an area as a vacation destination.

4. That the VRBO properties are located in neighborhoods and condominium buildings populated either by other visitors or permanent residents.

5. That they appreciate and respect the private property rights of the VRBO owner but also find, through personal experience, that the independent nature of the VRBO rental relationship and often the very location of the VRBO property, especially when located in a condominium building, generates localized activities and issues which are unique not just to the City but most often unique to a single neighborhood or condominium building due to such localized physical and economic issues as parking, traffic circulation, proximity to restaurants and bars, frequency and timing of garbage collection, and especially with respect to condominium buildings, rental by a distant owner who has little or no regard for the surrounding neighbors or units in the

building.

6. That it is utterly impossible for the legislature to anticipate or react to the myriad and constantly recurring local issues created by VRBO and that HB 425 and SB 188 are abject capitulations to the VRBO industry at the expense of not just local residents but the tourist industry itself. The undersigned would respectfully ask the legislature to remember that during much of the year in Panama City Beach there are more tourists than residents.

7. That this plea is not simply to protect local residents or to preserve the sanctity of home rule, but as importantly it is to preserve the ability of the City and the county to protect the tourism industry in Bay County, the lifeblood of Panama City Beach, from the unique, local and ever evolving excesses of the VRBO industry which Tallahassee cannot predict, observe or address.

8. That they respectfully ask the legislators to be mindful that regulations enacted by local governments must be enforced by those same governments and, if excessive or burdensome, the peoples' local elected representatives are quickly made aware of those burdens and any unintended consequences.

9. That the City and County's authority to regulate the potential excess activities generated by VRBO is more important than their ability to regulate the location of VRBO properties or impose life safety requirement upon the physical homes or units placed into the industry (which reportedly some communities have imposed as a barrier to the industry).

10. That the legislature is urged to defeat HB 425 and SB 188.


AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager is directed to forward copies of this executed Resolution immediately to the state legislators who also represent the people of the City, the Florida League of Cities, the City of Panama City, Bay County, and to all others whom he may determine appropriate.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED at the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Panama City Beach, Florida, this 13th day of April, 2017.

CITY OF PANAMA CITY BEACH

By: 
Mike Thomas, Mayor

ATTEST:


Diane Fowler, City Clerk

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CITY OF PANAMA CITY BEACH AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

1. DEPARTMENT MAKING REQUEST/NAME:

ADMINISTRATION/LEGAL

2. MEETING DATE:

APRIL 13, 2017

3. REQUESTED MOTION/ACTION:

APPROVE RESOLUTION URGING DEFEAT OF HB 425 AND SB 188 WHICH RESTRICTS LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO REGULATE VRBO.

4. AGENDA

PRESENTATION
PUBLIC HEARING
CONSENT
REGULAR

5. IS THIS ITEM BUDGETED (IF APPLICABLE)? YES NO N/A
BUDGET AMENDMENT OR N/A

DETAILED BUDGET AMENDMENT ATTACHED YES NO N/A

6. BACKGROUND: (WHY IS THE ACTION NECESSARY, WHAT GOAL WILL BE ACHIEVED)

The Florida Legislature is considering House Bill 425 and Senate Bill 188 which would restrict the ability of local government to regulate vacation rentals by owners and the shared lodging industry (collectively known as "VRBO"). The City of Panama City Beach appreciates and respects the private property rights of the VRBO owner, but through personal experience, has found the independent nature of the VRBO rental relationship and the location of the property generates localized activities and issues which are unique not just to the City but most often to a single neighborhood or condominium building due to such localized physical and economic issues. This is especially true with respect to condominium buildings and rental by a distant owner who has little or no regard for the surrounding neighbors or units in the building. It is the City's position that the legislature can not anticipate or react to the myriad and constantly recurring local issues created by VRBO and that these Bills are favorable towards the VRBO industry at the expense of not just local residents but the tourist industry itself.

Attached is a Resolution wherein the City urges the legislature to defeat HB 425 and SB 188.

If approved, the executed Resolution will be forwarded to the state legislators who represent the people of the City, the Florida League of Cities, the City of Panama City, Bay County and to all others whom the City Manager may deem appropriate.