

**From:** [Angela Jones](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Cc:** [angelajones62@comcast.net](mailto:angelajones62@comcast.net)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]2 NO Votes on the increase of TPA for short term rentals  
**Date:** Sunday, March 8, 2026 3:43:48 PM

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Dear Mayor and City Councilors,

Thank you for scheduling a public hearing on the TPA on Monday, March 9, 2026. Below is my written testimony for this hearing.

As you know, I have objected to the TPA tax being extended to Short Term Rentals in Salem. Please count my 2 NO votes, my property license number is 26-10159-MF short term rental. owned by Angela Jones two guest rooms so two votes of no!

Here are some of the reasons I have filed an objection:

1. Travel Salem is primarily interested in, and communicates with, hotels/motels. It does not provide many, if any, services for STR's. If Travel Salem was interested in adding STRs to the TPA, they should have communicated with STRs on what benefits they will provide specifically for STR owners. They have not done this. I tried several times to reach out to Angie who manages TravelSalem and she would not get back to me.
2. Travel Salem's out-of-the-way Visitor office isn't even open on weekends when the majority of our guests are in town.
3. Our guests should not be charged for services they do not receive.
4. I also objected to the way this remonstrance was created. When the hotels/motels voted to renew the TPA in December 2024 for an additional 5 years, the vote was one vote per person. They have 4 years left on their renewal.

In December 2025, the city changed the ordinance to allow one vote per "unit or room" and ask Hotels/Motels to vote again-even though they have 4 years left on their renewal. This essentially weighted the vote so that even if ALL STR's voted against the tax, the hotels/motels will out vote us. If the City truly cared about whether STRs want to be added to the TPA, the City would have limited the vote to one vote per person and made the remonstrance just for STRs for 4 years to coincide with the renewal date for Hotel/sMotels.

Additionally, staff added a requirement to the ordinance (Chapter 38.040) for all STRs to have been listed on a booking platform 60 days prior to the vote. When the City threatened STR owners with a \$2,000 a day fine for each day we hosted a guest without having a license, most STR owners removed their units from booking platforms and attempted to get licensed. The City threatened us, then made it impossible to cast a vote. And they have made it impossible to license most STRs in Salem.

This was not a requirement when hotels/motels cast their votes in 2024. It was implemented solely to prevent many STR owners from voting. This unfair treatment by City staff needs to stop. And Staff need to be held accountable for their abhorrent actions against citizens.

5. This remonstrance is not a vote to determine if STRs WANT to be added to the TPA, this is a vote to force STR to be part for the TPA.

I appreciate this opportunity to voice my disapproval of this remonstrance process and hope the City Council will understand why this TPA should not be implemented.

Respectfully submitted, Angela Jones 03/07/2026

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**From:** Bill Connor <[hustleconnor80@gmail.com](mailto:hustleconnor80@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 2, 2026 2:34 PM  
**To:** CityRecorder <[CityRecorder@cityofsalem.net](mailto:CityRecorder@cityofsalem.net)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Against the fee

We are against the increased occupancy tax air Airbnb.  
William and Aimee Connor

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**From:** [Claudia Howells](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Testimony for Agenda Item 26-53  
**Date:** Monday, March 9, 2026 11:11:10 AM  
**Attachments:** [STR testimony.docx](#)

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Please accept the attached testimony for Agenda Item 26-53.

Thank you

Claudia Howells

1045 Cross St. SE

503 363-6587

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## City of Salem Council Meeting, March 9, 2026

Testimony on Agenda Item 26-53

Submitted by Claudia Howells

1045 Cross St. SE, Salem, OR 97302

Madam Mayor, members of the Salem City Council,

Please accept my testimony on the change in city code that would include Short-Term Rentals to those required to pay the 2% Tourism Promotion Area tax.

I do not own, manage or have any financial investment in any property rented short-term, and I submit this based only on my own interest in the subject. I submitted comments on short-term rentals in 2024. Having spent ten years serving on planning commissions, three years on the committee that revised Salem's Unified Code, and several years on the SCAN board, I follow issues that affect my community and neighborhood. Though this may be a small change in code, it caught my attention.

Over many years, my family has stayed in vacation rentals in many places. They were an excellent option when our son was young, and when we stayed in places for more than a day or two. Being able to have a full kitchen, separate bedrooms, and a living space has made travel a much better experience. Platforms like Airbnb and VRBO now make booking such accommodations easier and safer. There is no question that short-term rentals contribute to a healthy tourism economy.

It is therefore surprising and concerning that Salem, where I have lived for 48 years, appears to be one of the most restrictive, most expensive and most punitive city in all of Oregon to host a vacation rental, and not by a small amount. Adding the TPA tax on top of the TOT is really adding insult to injury, excuse the cliché.

It is hard not to conclude that city leaders want to eliminate short-term rentals, because nothing else makes sense. I have read the letters from local hosts, and I am left wondering why this city is so hostile toward these small businesses. It's not surprising that many have chosen to operate without a city license.

I'm happy to see that a presentation from Travel Salem has been added to tonight's agenda, because, in recent years, the City of Salem has given little attention to the importance of tourism to its economy. The city's own budget documents show that you anticipate a decline in TOT revenue. Why is that? Is it because Salem's tourist economy is weak? How is Travel Salem doing to improve that outlook? Why is Travel Salem's tourist information office closed on weekends? Why does it seem to focus on a couple of big sporting events each year, rather than highlighting Salem's many natural, historic and cultural assets, encouraging visitors to stay longer. Why isn't Travel Salem advocating for the vacation rentals that are important to any tourist economy?

Healthy tourist economies need a diversity of accommodations. Putting burdens on STRs that are not placed on hotels or long-term rentals seems counterproductive to the city's budget. Eliminating vacation rentals will not eliminate problem houses, and I don't think it's a reach to

say that short-term rentals are often the nicest house on the block. It's astonishing that the city has spent a considerable amount of time and money to chase down unlicensed short-term rentals, when long-vacant houses, derelict properties and residences with multiple code violations, all within a block of my house, are tolerated, and enforcement depends solely on complaints from neighbors.

I was able to read the letter sent to STR hosts. It gives notice to this public hearing and also offers the option of objecting to the 2% tax. How does that work? You can remonstrate on something that doesn't apply to you? Is staff so certain that the code amendment will pass that they are saving postage? Has someone already counted votes? Have commitments to Travel Salem already been made? Having read many of the letters, I can understand why some people are confused about what is actually happening at tonight's meeting.

I'll also point out the obvious. Now that those included in the TPA are given a vote for every unit, hosts of STRs will always be outvoted by the big hotels, who only need to stay silent. It's hard not to see this as extremely cynical, and certainly not fair.

It would be easy to look at this code amendment as inconsequential, but I ask you to think beyond the spreadsheet. What message are you sending to those in the vacation rental business? What are your expectations for the sizeable amount of taxpayer money, even if it is from visitors, the city gives to Travel Salem? If you want to eliminate vacation rentals, or short-term rentals for visiting nurses, professors, college parents and construction crews, then just do that. Stop squeezing law-abiding, tax paying residents, and just tell visitors to stay in Keizer, which is far more hospitable to visitors. Take the time to fully understand the tourism industry and what it could contribute to the city. I think what you would hear from everyone involved in the lodging industry, they don't need more taxes. They need more guests.

You are stewards of the tax money you collect and spend. Before you vote, you should know how much TOT is collected from short-term rentals and how much would be collected from the TPA tax. You should know how Travel Salem will spend the money and be clear in your expectations.

Many of those directly affected are asking you to vote no, but I ask you to do more. Take a look at how city policies are supporting or hurting Salem's tourism economy. Bring STR regulations in line with other Oregon cities. Talk to our retail businesses about how to bring in more visitors. Reach out to our wonderful cultural assets, which are all hurting, to learn what they need to increase their revenue, without being overly dependent on public funds. Your own revenue estimates suggest an industry in trouble. You can change that.

**From:** [Carole Smith](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Testimony for Monday, March 9, 2026- Tourism Promotion Area tax  
**Date:** Friday, March 6, 2026 6:37:23 PM

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Dear City Council,

We are baffled by City Staffs attempt to throttle Short Term Rentals (STR's) in Salem.

First, after licensing requirement was passed in 2017 and not enforced for 9 years, city staff have suddenly decided to enforce licensing for all STR's. I do not think STR's are against the licensing requirements, however the current requirements and restrictions process is effectively putting approximately 90% of STR owners out of business in Salem.

Secondly, now you want to tax our guests 2% more for Travel Salem to promote tourism In our community. Travel Salem has not been of any benefit to STR owners. They are primarily a benefit for Hotels/Motels in Salem. Why should our guests be forced to pay for Hotel/Motel promotion?

You might want to read the attached industry newsletter published in January 2026 about the effects of effectively putting STR's out of business in communities. The results have not been what was intended. I believe the same results in Salem will show the detriments of putting so many of our short stay services out of business.

You might want to reconsider what city staff are promoting. Lawsuits are going to cost the City thousands, creativity will be stifled in Salem, retirees and Salem citizens who invested in SRT's will lose their income, and, if the article is correct, local citizens who need short term housing will not have a choice, tourists will book STRs elsewhere where other communities understand the value of tourism. Tourism related businesses will suffer, employees, cleaning crews and landscapers will lose their jobs. This is not what Salem should be pursuing to make our economy better.

We would recommend the City Council create a task force of STR owners/Managers, Community members, and city staff to rewrite the City ordinance regarding licensing that creates safe, accessible, healthy alternatives for tourists and our fellow citizens. Right now we are headed in the wrong direction and time is short to save jobs, tourists, tourism jobs and retain your STR operators.

Please take a few minutes to see how other communities who have effectively banned STRs are faring. It is not a pretty picture.

Here is the link: [https://www.rentresponsibly.org/how-short-term-rental-bans-backfire/?utm\\_campaign=7082296-%5BRcurring%20Comms%5D%20RR%20Digest&utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmi=407175660&utm\\_content=407175660&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.rentresponsibly.org/how-short-term-rental-bans-backfire/?utm_campaign=7082296-%5BRcurring%20Comms%5D%20RR%20Digest&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=407175660&utm_content=407175660&utm_source=hs_email)

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to moving forward together.

Carole Smith

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**From:** [Smith, Darren](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Short term rental owner vote- No!  
**Date:** Monday, March 9, 2026 11:15:35 AM

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Good morning- to whom it may concern:

I am a short term rental home owner and adamantly encourage a NO vote for increased taxes and reporting requirements.

Increasing short-term rental taxes risks reducing tourism demand, hurting local homeowners, encouraging underground rentals, and concentrating tourism revenue back into large hotel corporations rather than neighborhood economies.

Name: Darren Smith  
Address of unit: 5034 Leonardo Ct Salem 97306  
# of units: 1

Please consider the following

Higher taxes on short-term rentals can make destinations more expensive compared with competitors.

- Visitors may choose places besides Salem to stay in order to avoid taxes.
- Tourism is price-sensitive, especially for families or longer stays.
- If fewer visitors come, the broader tourism economy (restaurants, tours, retail) loses revenue.

Hosts Are Often Small Property Owners

Many short-term rental hosts are not corporations.

- Individuals rely on STR income to cover mortgages, HOA fees, and property taxes.
- Increased taxes can disproportionately impact middle-class homeowners who rent occasionally.

STRs Distribute Tourism Spending More Widely

Short-term rentals often bring visitors to neighborhoods outside traditional hotel districts.

This means:

- More money spent at local grocery stores
- Support for neighborhood

Property Taxes Already Contribute Significantly

STR owners usually pay:

- Residential or sometimes higher property tax rates
- Maintenance costs

Thank you for your consideration and support of a no vote!

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**From:** [Don Finley](#)  
**To:** [Finance](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Tourism Tax  
**Date:** Monday, March 9, 2026 9:53:02 AM

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To whom it may concern,  
I appose the 2% TPA tax

Donald R Finley

One Unit  
Hidden Treasure  
2785 Upper Breckenridge Loop NW  
Salem, OR 97304

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**From:** [Ellie Falletta](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Opposition of 2% increase  
**Date:** Monday, March 9, 2026 12:54:39 PM

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I am writing in opposition of the plan to increase fees on Airbnb rentals in the city of Salem. The current fee structure, inconsistent enforcement of permits, and cumbersome monthly reporting needs to be addressed before any further fees are put on individuals operating short term rentals.

Elizabeth Falletta  
920 Jefferson St NE, Salem, OR 97301  
1 unit - License 26 199521 00 MF

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**Ellie Falletta**

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**From:** [Evan West](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Re: Public Hearing on Short Term Rental Fees  
**Date:** Monday, March 9, 2026 2:41:35 PM

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Mayor Hoy and Members of City Council:

The South Central Association of Neighbors has an adopted strategic goal, which reads: "Support and encourage more medium density housing developments across the City, and oppose unoccupied short term rentals as they remove housing stock for Salem residents."

The efforts of the City of Salem to further identify and license short-term rental operations are appreciated. Assessing the same fees charged to hotels and other commercial short-term lodging operations is appropriate. As our strategic goal states, unoccupied (or non-accessory) short term rental of residential structures is detrimental to our ongoing housing stock shortage.

Per the delineation of type, I would reasonably expect that owner occupied short-term rental could be exempted from the fees charged to hotels and other lodging.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Evan West. Board Chair, South Central Association of Neighbors

--

Evan West, M.A.

He/Him/His

970-980-1445

[evanwest714@gmail.com](mailto:evanwest714@gmail.com)

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**From:** [Heather Ritchie](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]"No" to 2% TPA Tax  
**Date:** Sunday, March 8, 2026 1:51:35 PM

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Hello,

I would like to extend my vote of “no” to implement a 2% TPA tax to short term rentals operating in the City of Salem.

I feel strongly that I would be disproportionately represented by such a tax.

Hotels have the opportunity to tap Travel Salem for funding to help secure bids for business bringing groups to Salem, and as a small rental, I have major doubts that any resources would be offered as assistance to small STR operators.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Heather Ritchie  
1015 18th St NE  
1 unit

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

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**From:** [Joey Jordan](#)  
**To:** [Finance](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]RE: Hearing Set on Tourism Promotional Area Tax  
**Date:** Friday, March 6, 2026 3:31:53 PM

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Hello,

My name is Joseph Jordan and I operate one short-term rental, located at 2494 Crestbrook Dr NW in Salem. I oppose the 2% TPA tax.

Thank you,

Joseph Jordan

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**From:** [Kristina Davidson](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Tourism Promotional Area  
**Date:** Friday, March 6, 2026 2:59:50 PM

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I wonder if any of this extra money will be used to do things like clean up litter on the parkway...or to do a better job of covering up graffiti around town, or fix the historic clock downtown, or replace faded or damaged street signs, especially downtown. Honestly, I never invite friends or family to visit because these things, together with all the homeless issues around town look like this is a city that does not care...about anything! As the Capitol of this State, we should be the shining star...but we are anything but that.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

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**From:** [Kim Davis](#)  
**To:** [CityRecorder](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]comment on 3/9/26 Agenda #26-54  
**Date:** Sunday, March 8, 2026 11:02:17 AM

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I am writing to express strong support for the Tourism Promotion Area code to apply to Short-Term Rentals (STRs) and Accessory Short-Term Rentals (ASTRs).

This is a timely proposal. Cities around the globe are finally coming to grips with the impacts short term rentals have had on long term housing options for city residents. Many cities are wisely banning short term rentals outright. This tax is a small step in the right direction of at least creating fair taxation across lodging industries. Salem cannot continue giving short term rental rackets a free pass on paying their share in ways that will (allegedly) benefit the city as a whole.

K Davis  
Ward 4

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