

## Erika Shook

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**From:** Kristine Brown <kris@printonyx.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 21, 2021 8:21 PM  
**To:** Council Public Comment  
**Subject:** Vacation Rental Moratorium -- Updated to correct typos

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Dear San Juan County Council members:

As a 27-year resident of San Juan County and small business owner in the Town of Friday Harbor, I would respectfully ask you to retract the Vacation Rental Moratorium and instead look for real solutions to the high cost of living on our island. Let the current Vacation Rental regulations work themselves out and spend more time addressing ways of making housing, food, healthcare and utilities more affordable. The facts do not support the Moratorium: shutting down vacation rentals will not provide more affordable housing but will hurt our economy by turning away tourist dollars.

Here are some reasons I have heard from people who turn their homes into vacation rentals:

- They are able to afford home ownership in the islands by renting out for the summer and living in smaller places on the property (paying for a whole year's mortgage and bringing outside dollars into our economy at the same time).
- The wear and tear upon homes by long term renters who abuse the property so that homes had to be substantially, even totally, repaired to make them rentable.
- Dishonest renters allowing more people to live in the rental than agreed upon.
- Rental laws favoring the renter even when the circumstances above occurred.

Until you truly understand the reason people turn their homes and condos into vacation rentals you will never be able to adequately formulate a good solution. Take time to survey home owners and really get to know their issues.

It's important to find solutions, not make more regulations.

Some possibilities using existing county resources (Family Resource Center, San Juan Community Home Trust, Solid Waste Management, Public Hospital District, Homes for Islanders, WSU Extension, Skagit Valley College, existing building codes, REET funds, etc.) could be:

- Use the affordable housing REET to buy existing single or multi-family units and manage them as permanently-affordable rentals with strict oversight.
- Help inexperienced renters become responsible renters, and even home owners, by offering training in budgeting, home and yard maintenance, and other home management skills including growing their own food.
- Allow Detached ADUs on less than 5 acres with the requirement that they be used as affordable housing -- monitor their compliance. This could be especially beneficial for keeping aging residents in their own home with caregivers onsite instead of the property from being sold to finance long-term health care.
- Allow multi-family affordable housing units (including rentals) to be built in rural designations -- not all affordable housing should be consigned to the Town of Friday Harbor. Rural community development like The Oaks with well-maintained affordable homes that utilize shared resources (large open spaces, water systems, roads and utility infrastructure) are a benefit not a problem.
- Make health care more affordable by self-insuring our county.
- Find ways to generate our own energy and better manage our own waste to lower the cost of energy and solid waste disposal. (See what is happening in Washington

State: <https://impactbioenergy.com/technology/> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDp2cP8 - s0&feature=emb\\_rel\\_end](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDp2cP8-s0&feature=emb_rel_end) <https://impactbioenergy.com/ox-ad550/> )

- Work on public transportation to allow workers to live farther away from their places of employment and cut down on the expense of owning and maintaining vehicles.
- Create a carpooling network to match existing drivers with those needing transportation.

There is a long list of things that you could work on to make living here more affordable rather than a moratorium on Vacation Rentals which will not provide more affordable housing but rather leave second homes empty most of the year. And, in the long run, you cannot hope to bring new industry to replace tourism without addressing these basic, real issues.

Sincerely,

Kristine Brown, Owner  
Printonyx, Inc.