



MAKING PUBLIC COMMENT

TIPS

- This is called providing testimony if it is during the legislative session.
- Keep the length of the comment about two minutes.
- identify yourself with your name, hometown, occupation, affiliation, or other information that will indicate your acquaintance with the subject.
- Spell out your last name for the record.
- End with an ask (e.g. I encourage you to continue to prioritize early childhood education and make it accessible and affordable for Montana families).
- Make sure to say thank you and identify you're available for questions (if comfortable).
- Following the decorum below is required. Do not let this scare you!

BEGINNING OF YOUR COMMENT EXAMPLE

Good afternoon Chair _____ and member of the committee.

My name is Jane Doe, D-O-E and I am a kindergarten teacher at Yellowstone Elementary, as well as a parent of two children under the age of five years old.

HOW TO RESPOND TO A QUESTION

- *Legislator: Mr. Chair, I have a question for Jane Doe."*
- *Chair: "Question for Jane Doe."*
- ***You: "Yes, Mr. Chair and Representative _____."***
- *Legislator: "Mr. Chair, Jane Doe, my question is _____. Mr Chair."*
- ***You: "Mr. Chair, Representative _____. Thank you for the question. (answer the question). Thank you. Mr. Chair"***



MAKING PUBLIC COMMENT

EXAMPLE

Good afternoon Chair Rhoades and members of the committee. My name is Jane Doe D-O-E and I am a business owner in Townville, Montana.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak on the short-term rental topic this afternoon. I have been a host in Townville for the past four years, renting out the guest house on my property. My guests are often families visiting students at the university, traveling nurses providing care at the Townville Hospital, and retirees considering moving here. Not only have I met lifelong friends through this experience, hosting has helped me pay for my daughter's college education, maintain my property to the highest standards, and save for retirement.

Short term rentals do not just benefit hosts, they benefit all of us. As the Tourism Board reported, STRs generate \$7 million in visitor spending in Townville. I would also like to emphasize that STRs disperse this money to other local businesses keeping it in our communities.

I understand and empathize with the concern some residents have with potential nuisance issues at STRs in their neighborhoods – but all properties and all tenants have the potential to cause nuisances, and STRs are often unfairly scapegoated. In fact, a study by the College of Townville found that STR guests are not louder than long term tenants. Still, I agree that nuisance issues could be better mitigated across the board. This can be easily accomplished with the enforcement of Townville's existing nuisance ordinance, rather than stripping the rights of responsible STR operators like me.

As you consider this ordinance proposal, your decisions should be based on facts and data, not anecdotes, as well as all consider all the economic benefits STRs bring our state.

Please consider a balanced approach that allows responsible operators to continue hosting with reasonable requirements so that our entire community may all continue to benefit. I am available to answer any questions. Thank you.