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To: Vacation Rental Comments
Subject: VR caps

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My husband Chris and I have had two vacation rentals on Orcas for the past six years. We are full time island residents. We do not use a management company—rather run, maintain, book and even clean our own rentals. I communicate directly without our renters, make clear the rules and expectations and pass along all regulations. I have NEVER had a complaint from neighbors or otherwise. Ironically the only time neighbors have complained was where we used our VR for a full time rental. Not only did the couple have unruly and loud dogs, but they literally TRASHED our house! It took weeks to repair and clean. I will never rent full time again for this reason!

We support local businesses. When I have short term VR people in, I have a basket of local goods from various companies: Brown Bear Bakery bread, Girl Meets Dirt preserves, Local Goods Granola, Lopez Island Roastery coffee and eggs from the local farm stand. In addition, we have an extensive list of restaurants and activities that we promote. Our renters go out into the island and shop, eat and play—supporting the local economy themselves. Do not cap VR permits in any way. Our guests are a vital link in keeping the money flowing on Orcas. If I were to make any changes, I would say that the use of management companies should be limited—these are used by people who don't want any part of the rental process and the companies operating them have no skin in the game. For those of us who are following rules, paying our taxes and working hard to keep our rentals running, a cap is a punishment that is not deserved.

Chris and Jennifer Walsh

Orcas Island