

**To the Editor and Borough Assembly Members:**

Finding a place to call home in Petersburg has become a growing concern and even a struggle. We've seen how difficult it's become to find affordable, long-term housing, whether we're looking to rent or to buy. Many have found it a challenge that is insurmountable. It's a concern that affects everyone from families just starting out, to our fishermen, to the folks who serve our schools and clinics.

We need more homes. Our town's housing vacancy rates are incredibly low. This isn't just an inconvenience; it's a real barrier. It impacts our ability to bring in the new teachers, nurses, and skilled workers our community needs, and it makes it harder for our own children to see a future where they can afford to stay in the town they grew up in.

We've seen the rise of short-term rentals listed on sites like Airbnb and Vrbo. We understand that tourism is important to our economy. But currently there are very few local rules specifically for these short-term rentals. This lack of planning is contributing to an imbalance.

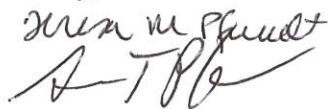
Other communities in Southeast Alaska have taken steps like requiring owners to live on-site or setting limits on how many homes can be used as short-term rentals. Here in Petersburg, our focus has largely been on collecting taxes from these rentals. While those taxes are important for our borough, they don't solve the core problem: when a home shifts from being a place where a family lives year-round to a vacation spot, it's one less home available for long-term housing.

It means one less option for the police officer trying to move his family here, the mechanic moving to town to work on boats or cars, or the local business owner needing to house an employee. This trend can push up rental prices and home values, making it harder for our own wages to keep pace, making it difficult for people to put down roots and build a life in Petersburg.

How can we ensure our tourism thrives while we protect the homes that make Petersburg a strong, affordable place to live? This isn't about shutting down all short-term rentals; it's about finding a sensible path forward that ensures the health of our community.

Addressing the lack of short-term housing regulations in Petersburg is a crucial step we must take to protect Petersburg's future for us all.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alec and Teresa Pfundt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alec and Teresa Pfundt

August 5, 2025

(907-518-1414)