Mackinaw Mill Creek Camping Warns of Lame Duck Bill Rushed through MI Senate


MACKINAW CITY, Mich. (PRWEB) November 26, 2018 -- Vince Rogala, Co-owner of Mackinaw Mill Creek Camping, is warning Michigan’s residents/tourists about a bill that he says threatens family-owned hospitality businesses in favor of franchise and large hotel owners.

“Sponsored by our Senator, Wayne Schmidt, Senate bill 703-707 is being rushed through a lame duck session to strengthen the so-called “Community Convention or Tourism Marking Act”, MCL 141.871, et seq. This law gives franchise/large hotel owners who control local visitor bureaus the legal right to use your room tax money to effectively muscle out small local businesses they see as competition,” explained Rogala.

“Most residents/visitors and Michigan’s politicians think their room tax assessment is supposed to promote the ‘entire community.’ However, the hotel lobby made sure that this revenue is only legally required to promote the hotel industry, and to put more “heads in (hotel owner’s) beds.” “They are not required to promote restaurants, gift shops, water parks, golf courses, historic parks, or campgrounds like ours - unless it's beneficial to their hotel business,” says Rogala.

“The new bill doesn’t fix the existing act’s faults - it only strengthens the hotel lobby's’ grip on millions of our tax dollars. Hardly anyone understands they are being personally taxed to benefit hotels. To the best of my knowledge, This handout is not done for any other industry, certainly not for campgrounds - why should hotels have their hands in our pockets?” asked Rogala.

“Right now, this law is allowing the Mackinaw Area Visitors Bureau to impose a membership fee increase on Mill Creek Campground from $500 a year, to over $10,000. A fee unheard of for any other campground in the entire State of Michigan. All three local Mackinaw City campgrounds were financially forced out of membership. All three local Mackinaw City campgrounds were financially forced out of membership in their local Visitors Bureau after receiving notice of the outrageous fee hikes—this feels like economics warfare against my family-run campground,” charges Rogala.

“This will continue happening in communities statewide where a few hotel owners have a monopoly over their local Visitors Bureau and, the new law makes things worse,” warns Rogala.

“This was set up nearly 40 years ago without any real government supervision. When I personally suggested to Senator Schmidt, (who worked in the hotel industry prior to serving in the Senate), that when our government imposes a tax, it should have some type of supervision in place - he seemed disinterested” says Rogala”.

“Any lodging business with 10 or more rooms is required to collect the Room Tax/Assessment. Mackinaw Mill Creek Camping is required to collect tens of thousands of dollars annually on behalf of the local Visitors Bureau (for its cabin rentals),” explains Ryan R. Charles, Esq., an attorney for the campground. “Apparently that is not enough, as the Visitors Bureau is now requiring the campground pay thousands of dollars more for a separate “membership fee”, or lose out on advertising through the Visitors Bureau marketing program.”
Rogala is urging his campers and everyone in Michigan to contact their local representatives to let them know how they feel about SB 703-707 and this last-minute attempt to give the hotel industry a big payoff at the expense of Michigan’s visitors and small hospitality businesses.

For More Information click here.
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