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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **SPI CITY COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY PASS SHORT TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE**

The City of South Padre Island City Council passed the first reading of the Short Term Rental Ordinance on Wednesday, April 15, 2015.

**South Padre Island, TX – April 17, 2015:** A controversial city ordinance to collect as much as \$300,000 a year in hotel occupancy taxes passed Wednesday, April 15, 2015. All council members voted in the affirmative to proceed with the first reading of the ordinance that will charge \$50 to register individual rental property units and impose a fine of \$500 a day for violations. “Not everybody completely agrees with everything but I think we’ve come an awful long way,” said Council Member Dennis Stahl, who strongly supported the ordinance.

The \$50 registration fee will be waived for rental property owners who currently pay their hotel occupancy taxes. SPI estimates that about 1,000 units do not pay hotel occupancy taxes, which add up to an annual loss of about \$300,000. “This is a very vital industry for South Padre Island. This is to get better compliance, which we’ve been struggling with for many years,” said Mayor Barry Patel. He also stated that it was not punitive.

The ordinance requires properties that rent for less than 30 days to register each unit and list ownership information. The ordinance would also require properties to designate a representative to handle any complaints and be available 24 hours a day, within distances of one-hour drives. Violators would face daily fines of as much as \$500.

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