

My name is Mary Wright. I have been a resident of Monterey County for over 40 years and of Big Sur for the past 30 years. I am here today speaking on behalf of the Big Sur Local Coastal Plan Defense Committee, and to emphasize the importance the Big Sur community places on our Local Coastal Plan.

The Big Sur LCP was the culmination of 10 years of intense community, county, state and federal commitment to the preservation of the Big Sur coast. As far back as 1976, the Coastal Commission singled out Big Sur as a unique area within the California coast, requiring special consideration in its protection. Since then, the Big Sur Local Coastal Plan, certified unanimously by the Coastal Commission, has been lauded by coastal planners, public officials and conservationists as an exceptional example of a collaborative plan which addresses the many challenges within the Big Sur Planning Area, and which strikes the correct balance between coastal access and resource protection.

The Big Sur LCP Defense Committee represents over 200 members of the Big Sur community, many of whom have participated for years in the preservation of Big Sur as outlined in the Local Coastal Plan. Amongst those 200 members are the 3 former County Supervisors of the Fifth District who each committed countless hours engaging in coastal access and resource protection efforts in Big Sur. Sam Farr, Karin Strasser Kauffman and Dave Potter all know Big Sur well and understand the complexity and uniqueness of its coastal planning issues. Each former supervisor has demonstrated a lifetime commitment to public and coastal access, and each has concluded that Short Term Rentals are inconsistent with the Big Sur LCP.

Recently, the Big Sur LCP Defense Committee requested former long term coastal planner and former State Coastal Commission Executive Director Dr. Charles Lester to undertake an independent analysis of the consistency of STR's in the Big Sur Planning Area. His analysis supports our contention that significant inconsistencies are apparent. Our request of you today is to direct staff to fully evaluate our position. We believe that you will conclude that STR's are inconsistent with the current LCP and should be prohibited in the Big Sur Planning Area.