July 24, 2017

Honorable Herb J. Wesson, President
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Ste. 440
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Herb:

I write to you today as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Black Business Association (BBA), the oldest active ethnic business organization in the state of California, which serves as an advocate on behalf of African American businesses and our broader African American community.

Of the thousands of businesses in California that are owned by African Americans, tied directly or indirectly to the hospitality industry, many opportunities are afforded our members and community through jobs and economic opportunities at every level. We are aware of the changes that the growth of the home-sharing economy has had, not just within the hospitality industry but in other sectors in the City of Los Angeles as well.

While the BBA supports innovation and change, we fundamentally support progressive efforts that diversify the economic opportunities for African Americans in California and Los Angeles. In that vein, we believe that the Short-Term Rental Ordinance currently pending before the City. The Ho9 Council falls short on the cap of yearly number of days a residence can be used. The concept of holding the home-sharing industry to account for its activities is badly needed, but should be limited to no more than 80 days a year.
It is an accepted fact that communities of color are disproportionately impacted by the short-term rental industry. Families are being tossed out of rental units so owners can rent them by the night, in order to secure greater income. This proposed ordinance will only serve to encourage homeowners and speculators to find ways to maximize their properties uses and create an incentive for them to evict less profitable, long-term tenants who are primarily minorities in Los Angeles.

We recommend that you limit the number of days to 80 or fewer, and to discourage weekend short-term rentals. This would allow individuals their right to continue to rent properties while participating in this new industry. There is no question that home-sharing is a vital business for the area; however, it should be done logically and respectfully considering the community members who have been in the City of Los Angeles area for generations.

We urge you to revise the ordinance, to seek protections for economically-challenged communities, and to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to find a solution that will work to keep California at the forefront of economic growth.

Respectfully,

Earl "Skip" Cooper, II
President and
Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Los Angeles City Council Members