

To: Housing Committee
Dec. 10, 2016
Council File Number: 14-1635-S2

Short-term rentals have spread like a virus in neighborhoods of Los Angeles - despite being illegal - especially in Venice, Hollywood, Silver Lake, and Echo Park. Many areas are so overrun by vacation rentals, they are no longer neighborhoods, but more like vacation zones. **Raising a family or simply enjoying one's home** has changed when you don't know your neighbor whose house is now a revolving doors of vacationers.

The STR website **Airbnb, with its \$30 billion valuation**, has highly-paid, expert staff whose job is to increase the number of rentals in local areas even when they are illegal like here in Los Angeles.

Properties that residents, like me, live in have value that can't be measured - **our residences are priceless**, they are our **homes**. I demand more from my City officials to protect us from these lawbreakers who have no respect for our laws, and no consideration for their neighbors. **Please, don't cater to these special interests**. They are less than one percent of our City's population, but are very loud, demanding, vocal and say they feel entitled to break the law.

Because I am enduring an illegal Airbnb for over 2 1/2 years, which is not enforced, I cannot conceive how short term rentals can be enforced in the future. And as a result of this, I feel the **current ban on short term rentals, per Alan Bell's memo, should remain in force until clear enforcement can be determined**.

An important source of tax money is back TOT tax. Airbnb should pay the City of Los Angeles for back TOT tax since 2008. **In San Francisco, Airbnb paid back TOT tax of \$12 million** while at the same time buying advertising to tell San Franciscans that they should be "happy" that they got the \$12 million.

<http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2015/10/22/airbnb-removes-snarky-bus-stop-ads-apologizes-for-offending-san-franciscans/>

<http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/matier-ross/article/M-R-Airbnb-pays-tens-of-millions-in-back-6087802.php>

At the very least, the ordinance must be amended to favor our communities rather than Airbnb and their Hosts who are currently operating illegally. Why reward people who dare to break the law? It seems extremely unfair to reward them. "Home Sharing" should not be a cash cow for the tiny minority of Airbnb hosts. Residents, like me, are busy with our lives, many of whom have no idea what an STR is. I had never heard of Airbnb until 2 1/2 years ago when a couple bought the house across the street as their vacation rental investment. They pretended that they were going to move in, but never did. They were already living at a house in Los Feliz for 1 year. If the Airbnb never appeared across the street from me, I may never have learned anything about the short term rental abuses. Many of us normal residents cannot be at City hearings because of work and family obligations and may never have thought that their zoning would be changed to allow hotels. Ignorance is bliss - they don't know, they are not aware of the problems and abuse a hotel next door would be like.

I am a caregiver to both of my parents right now, but this problem of short term rentals is so egregious that I must do what I can to fight them. I came to the hearing on Dec. 4th to speak for us, the 99.9 percent who get NO BENEFIT from Airbnb or short term rentals. Instead we get heartache, lies and disrespect, no enforcement, no compensation, and harassment. Who is sticking up for us? We ourselves are sticking up for us. **Please remember this fact: We law-abiding residents don't have a deep pocket worth \$30 billion like the Airbnb Hosts have.**

180 days is too much. That is half the year! Airbnb says that it is not intended to be a business in our residential zones. It is for seniors to make ends meet, or for low income to make ends meet. If this is true, then I am ashamed of the many hosts who break the law and take advantage of the situation. They have no fear of prosecution since the City Attorney is not enforcing. I am a law abiding responsible citizen in my neighborhood, you can depend on me. But Airbnb provides illegal businesses to selfish hosts. Hardship is no excuse for breaking the law.

The internet platforms MUST give the City the data about the Hosts; without it, STRs will continue to be out of control. Having the data is the most efficient way to get rid of the many, many commercial operators that exist in Los Angeles like the Host across the street from my house who now has four Airbnb's. If Airbnb really wants to cooperate, then they should share the data with the City of LA short term rental enforcing staff. The Airbnb commercial hosts laugh in our faces knowing that it is very difficult to prove. When they come and investigate, all it takes is a set of lies to send the LADBS or Housing authorities away. Airbnb is constantly improving and changing their website making it more and more difficult to identify the actual host or actual physical address without booking the rental. It currently takes a

lot of time and being a sleuth to find data and give it the City to investigate. Meanwhile, Airbnb does more and more to be covert while they and their hosts KNOW it is illegal. They pass the buck from the Host to Airbnb to the City. Will no one give up the information? And if not, will Airbnb please provide the necessary data to enforce?

Residents, like me, are so upset that we are considering moving. There are tendencies for abuse from STRs - Ellis Act violations, multiple unit STR hosts, empty homes without a full time resident, they lie to the neighbors, the Hosts are even bringing malicious lawsuits against the neighbors who try to have them prosecuted, Hosts don't even have to meet the guests anymore just a lockbox or leave the key under the mat, there is noise & parking nuisances. Guests do not act like a resident, after all, they are people on vacation.

Short Term Rentals should be banned like other cities have done - Anaheim, Santa Barbara, and more.

Sincerely,
Jane Taguchi
323-360-1781
20+ year Silverlake Resident
Born in Los Angeles
Lifelong Los Angeles Resident
30+ year Los Angeles business owner