

Dear Councilman Bonin,

First of all, as a constituent I'd like to thank you for the reasonable stance you took on the Airbnb controversy last week in the City Council meeting. I saw you recently at the Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association meeting a few weeks ago and meant to talk to you then, but you were in a hurry to get home to your husband, so I didn't have a chance.

I'm an Airbnb host. I limit my hosting to my own home while I am present, and I allow a maximum of two guests at any one time most commonly for two or three days to ten days. My guests are usually vacationers, but I have also had business travellers, non-custodial fathers visiting a child, grandparents visiting children/grandchildren, a neighbor who wanted a place nearby for his visiting parents, wedding attendees, locals (Cheviot Hills) whose house was undergoing renovation, locals whose apartment was damaged by a fire, people who are considering moving to the area, people for one day stays who were just passing through to somewhere else, and someone who wanted a place free from the distractions of home where he could write. I have guests who have driven in and brought their bicycles to take advantage of the excellent opportunities for biking (and hiking) in my area that I'm sure you are familiar with. My covered patio is a safe place to leave their bicycles. The space I use for my guests according to a now deceased neighbor was originally designed as a "man cave" complete with a wet bar! It is a part of my home that would otherwise be wasted as I live by myself and have no use for such a space. It would probably not be legal for me to rent it long term except to a roommate as my house is not zoned as a duplex. I am retired. The revenue I derive from my Airbnb listing is used to maintain my house. Right now I am saving for a new garage door and the second phase of a very costly deck replacement, so the money is going back into the local economy on my end. The guests are also spending locally. I keep a folder of recommended local restaurant menus and guests often express appreciation for my recommendations. They shop at local markets and stores as well. I've noticed that especially when overseas guests leave, they leave behind boxes and bags from local stores indicating shopping sprees at the Promenade and Santa Monica Place. I've even had a guest who asked me to help him arrange delivery of flowers and champagne from local merchants as a surprise for his girlfriend. (I chose Farrah's Flowers and Fireside Liquors) Without Airbnb these guests, many of whom are in their 20s and 30s, would not be able to afford to stay in my area. The nearest hotel, the Miramar, is \$500/night and frequently has no rooms available even at those prices. My listing is a fraction of the price. However, I do steer my guests to Fig, the hotel's excellent restaurant. There is the long-established Channel Inn down the street from me that is \$300/night, often sold out and unaffordable for students, retirees or young workers. Again my listing is less than half of that. I have been listing my space on Airbnb for about six months now, and I have been impressed by the quality of my guests. My guests have been quiet, clean and considerate and very grateful of my hospitality. I have a no smoking rule and with the exception of only a couple of guests early on, it has been adhered to. I also don't allow parties or guests who are not part of the original booking, and those rules have been 100% respected. I also have smoke/carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers both for my own safety and the safety of my guests. I am confident that with Airbnb's screening tools in place and common sense on my part that I will continue to enjoy hosting considerate, appreciative, non-destructive guests whose visits will enhance the local economy. I would also like to add that I own a couple of small apartment buildings on Bronson Avenue in Councilman Wesson's district. My son lives in one unit and we rent the others. I have no plans to convert these to Airbnb rentals, and I prohibit tenants in my leases from using them as Airbnb rentals. However, with the draconian rent control that exists, especially in Santa Monica, and the unintended consequences of the Shriver Act that make it all but impossible to evict low income tenants even for non-payment of rent without becoming embroiled in an expensive, wasteful jury trial, I can certainly understand the motivation of some landlords for wanting to have more control over their property. Thankfully, half of my apartments are not subject to rent control.

And by the way, if you and your spouse are ever in Nashville, please consider staying with my niece Alexis and her wife Britt in their lovely, historic Forrest Avenue East Nashville home : <https://www.airbnb.com/users/show/3262558>

Leslie Hope