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CF#14-1635-S2

1 message

James Yates <jpinjay@gmail.com>

Fri, May 27, 2016 at 9:43 AM

To: mayor.garcetti@lacity.org, matthew.glesne@lacity.org, cpc@lacity.org, justin.wesson@lacith.org, councilmember.wesson@lacity.org, councilmember.david.ryu@lacity.org, Sharon.dickinson@lacity.org, etta.armstrong@lacity.org, Julia Casillas <julia.casillas@airbnb.com>

Thank you for the opportunity to add our voices to the numbers of Los Angeles residents who offer short-term rentals to visitors from around the world. We are a retired international couple of African-American and Korean heritage, married for over 55 years. Home sharing allows us to learn about other cultures and to share the L.A. hometown spirit with our guests. It also brings added business to local shops and attractions in our area. Furthermore, it gives us the chance to earn the funds necessary to support our grand children's education from elementary school through college. In addition, we have established the Soul-2-Seoul scholarship fund which rewards student who are building unity among the diverse peoples within our community. As of this date we have presented 27 \$2,000 scholarships to deserving students. We might add that the scores of outstanding reviews we receive from our guests may classify us as Good-Will ambassadors for Los Angeles.

Our home consists of four apartment units, three of which are regular rentals and the fourth serves as our primary residence for the past 20 years. We use the extra spaces in our unit for home-sharing. In spite of the continued increases in utility costs, taxes, and general expenses, we have avoided the annual rent increases for our regular tenants which are so prevalent in our city. This has encouraged our tenants to stay with us longer and helps them to strengthen their financial position.

While we agree with the need for government regulation and registration for home-sharing, It seems contradictory to impose a 90-day limit, which would hamper our ability to earn the required fees and funds to continue our humanitarian efforts.. Why force the space to sit idle for 275 days? We believe any limit to the number of days or the number of rooms would be counter-productive. As seniors, we would much rather leave a positive impact for future generations rather than search for a hand-out.

Kind regards, James & In Ja Yates

May 27, 2016

To Our Distinguished Officials,

THANK YOU for taking the time to provide the hearings and in reading this letter.

Let me introduce myself:

I am a single mom and home owner in Venice, CA. I am also proud to be an Airbnb host. Over the past three years I have been able to supplement my income as a small business owner by hosting domestic and international travelers from every corner of the world in my home, in two spare bedrooms. In addition to receiving financial benefit, our family has received great personal enrichment by hosting these unique and wonderful guests. My children have experienced sharing their home with people from Japan, Korea, France, Germany, China, Australia, as well as a dozen other countries. At a young age they have a sense of being an integral part of a world community; without ever having had to leave home, or miss a day of school!

One may ask "Aren't you afraid of having strangers in your home?"

Even being a single mom with two young teens, I am never concerned about this. On the contrary; our guests could not be more polite, respectful and quiet. We welcome them into our family as part of the family and more often than not we become fast friends. Indeed, welcoming travelers into a family home is an age old practice, and we are honored to be participating in this tradition in 21st century America. In this world of 'cyber business' and 'virtual acquaintances' it is somewhat of a "sacred privilege" to be personally connected to people who would otherwise be strangers. There is a real sense of humanity in our lives as we are with people from walks of life on a regular basis.

"Won't home sharing hurt the hotel business?"

It is crucial to point out that the type of guests who travel this way are a NEW market of travelers. This is a class of people who would not normally be able to travel due to the high costs of doing so. Families with children, young couples, and retirees are finally able to visit our fair city. With the opening of home sharing more people from ALL walks of life can now afford to travel. When I had a problem with one of my rooms and needed to find a hotel for my guests to stay in, it was very difficult to find a vacant room for them in a hotel. This proves that hotels are NOT suffering due to Airbnb. We finally did find a room available and in this case, the hotel benefitted by the hosting activity.

"What about the shortage of housing for L.A. residents?"

My private home was never available on the L.A. housing market nor would it be in the future. What I have are spare rooms in my house that I feel comfortable having guests share our home

and be with us, that I would not be comfortable with renting to a long term tenant. Hosting a guest is a unique experience for both the guest and the host and very unlike having a tenant.

“What other benefits could this provide?”

If home sharing were to disappear a large sector of our service community; including professional cleaners, photographers, gardeners, restaurants, coffee shops, theaters attractions, local businesses, and handymen, would be adversely affected. I assert that this is a growing market and will only get more and more vibrant as more people become aware of this way of travel. With the support of people like yourselves this market sector surely will flourish, enriching our city and employing hundreds more in local businesses and service industries.

Regarding the proposed ordinances:

The proposed ordinance as it stands would seriously hamper and possibly destroy the home sharing community; hosts and guests alike.

Item (2)(f) and (d)(6)

I currently have two spare rooms that are often used as guest rooms in my home. With two modest rooms I am able to keep the bills paid and keep up with the ever demanding expenses of being a single working mom with two pre-teens in the city of Los Angeles. Last fall, my kids and I took a vacation to visit my family overseas and had a guest family stay in our entire home- which appears as a third listing for the same address. Our vacation budget depended solely on the ability to earn while away as the income from this allowed us to offset our expenses. Without this arrangement and the ability to have the addition listing, my kids and I would not have the finances to make this trip.

Item (d)(3)

The 90 day limit is too restrictive and excludes most home owners from participating in home sharing. A severe restriction like this would seriously hamper my ability to support my family and would more than likely kill my business.

Regulating short-term rentals; providing a framework of qualifying guidelines, good neighbor practices, and safeguards for hosts, are all supported. Creating viable solutions to help safeguard communities are also embraced by hosts. We simply ask that the the current ordinance proposal be modified. With careful revisions, short term rentals could well be A WIN-WIN FOR EVERYONE. We have seen this done successfully in other California cities like Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert, Palm Springs and so on...

In Conclusion;

The short-term rental business has existed harmoniously in our neighborhoods thus far. In the past three to four years LA's economy has become a robust one. I assert that Airbnb and the

home sharing activity has contributed to this. There is no way to measure the myriad of intangible benefits of home sharing.

Home Sharing continues to enrich the lives of many and it enables the people of Los Angeles to create a real-life (not a virtual) global community. In addition, allowing home sharing to thrive will drive a burgeoning 'guest' economy that will compliment our communities, increase revenue for our local businesses, keep our jobs intact, and enable all citizens of the world to experience a very human and REAL Los Angeles, California.

Please, re-consider the ordinance. There is no person in the city of Los Angeles who has not benefitted already or who will not benefit in the future from home sharing. Choose to empower the people of Los Angeles. Together we can create a world of understanding, peace, and compassion- for our city, for our children, and for generations to come.

I thank you for your time, for your listening, and for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Angela Eren
Airbnb Host, Los Angeles, CA

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Dear Mr. Bonin;

Throwing the baby out with the bathwater is not the solution to the housing crisis and short term rental is not your culprit. Gentrification, tourism and the lack of government sponsored low income housing is to blame. There are also abusers of the short term rental system. These big corporations that buy up apartment buildings and convert the apartments to short term housing like a hotel should be stopped.

We have not taken jobs from hotel workers and have in fact created higher paying jobs of \$20-25 per hour for housekeepers that have quite their minimum wage jobs at hotels. If the hotels were really loosing money by charging between \$250-500 per room per night then they would not be building more hotels and charging these high rates. Short term housing has allowed the middle class families to travel that would otherwise not be able to afford a hotel room in Los Angeles for these rates. Short term housing has brought an influx of tourism and if cut off will hurt our local merchants.

I want regulation and regulation needs to be addressed. We need to stop the abusers but allow the ma and pa's to go on. I believe the 90 day a year cap would ruin these little guys and the big abusers would figure out a way to get around them by doing bookings from overseas. The fines are too high and probably cannot be enforced unless you as a government create a very expensive agency.

Gentrification has already happened in most neighborhoods. Your rent control housing is being bought, torn down and rebuilt without rent control. The government cannot stop it apparently so it will continue and spread.

My suggestions for regulations:

1. Limit the short term housing to only the people who live on the residence and not the number of rooms or grannie houses in the back. This would cut out the abusers and insure that the neighbors will not be disturbed.
2. Allow online registration of the units with companies such as airbnb so they can collect the taxes and report the abuses. This would cut down on creating an expensive large agency. These companies would follow the rules because not to do so would be fined and they would lose their business.
3. Take the money made from the taxes and build low income housing. We are talking 50 million a year to build low income housing that will never be taken away from developers.

Thank you for your time. I hope you do the right thing and not try to stop a moving train but instead divert the momentum in a new direction.

Sincerely,

Heidi Mylo