



# Hey, I'm Melody!

Los Angeles, California, United States · Member since May 2013

Melody is living in Los Angeles, Los Feliz.



Reviews



Verified ID

## Verified ID

Email Address  
Verified

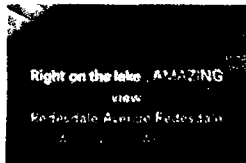
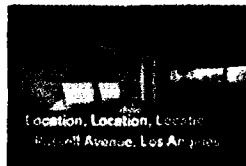
Phone Number  
Verified

Reviewed  
23 Reviews

Offline ID  
Driver License

## About Me

## Listings (3)



## Reviews (22)

### Reviews From Guests



Michèle

This house is large and clean and beautiful. We had a group of 12 adults and never felt cramped for space. One thing to note is the in-law unit in the backyard does not have A/C (only a fan). Otherwise the place was fantastic -- my favorite part is the red couch in the kitchen.

August 2014

Location, Location, Location...



Claire

Amazing house!! Melody made sure we had everything we needed, even when the power went out in Los Angeles!

July 2014

Right on the lake. AMAZING view



David

Superbe villa, très bien équipée avec une vue magnifique sur Silver Lake. Nous avons passé 3 nuits exceptionnelles dans une maison de stars. Nous avons eu un très bon contact avec Melody qui a répondu très vite à nos messages. Le quartier est sympa et proche de tout. C'est vraiment une ville à louer si vous pouvez.

July 2014

Right on the lake. AMAZING view



Inshant

Melody was considerate, helpful, and available. The place is gorgeous! I'd book again.

July 2014

Location, Location, Location...



Gary

The reservation was canceled 30 days before arrival. This is an automated posting.

June 2014

Right on the lake. AMAZING view



Daniel

Bright space, great yard, plenty of room.

June 2014

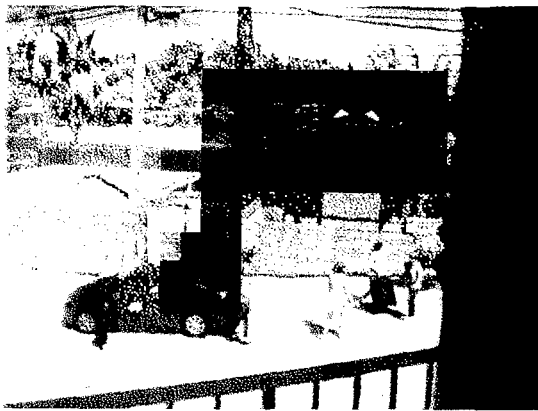
Right on the lake. AMAZING view



10/25/14 This photo shows the renters mistakenly in MY driveway asking to unload their luggage.

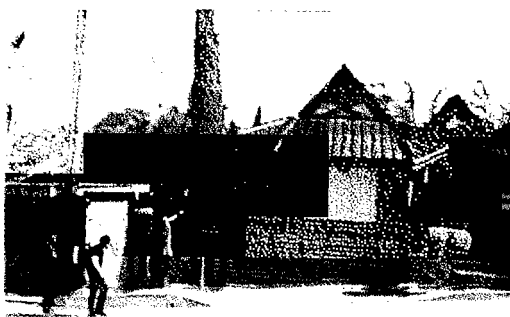
I was able to do a screengrab from a video to capture the latest renters. They tried to open a neighbors gate by mistake.

The screengrab below is from September 2014. And in comparison, today the host has 50 reviews but has removed her headshot from the listing presumably to try to conceal her identity. In addition, the host listed three properties back in 2014, but did not live in any of them. This couple owns 3 homes worth over \$4 million. They are not in financial difficulty.



July 2014 – a company retreat. They also had a caterer.

11/10/14 A group of renters unloading Luggage at the rental.



3 business men entering the lower level . Renters are parked in front of another neighbor's of the rental. The house is split into two garage and also in the rental's driveway even though it is R1.

Heidi Ifft  
17 Buccaneer St.  
Marina Del Rey, CA 90292

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The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-S2, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmember Bonin:

My name is Heidi Ifft. I am a 40-something, professional. I work as a talent representative, managing actors. I have lived at 17 Buccaneer St. for over 20 years and I once loved my quiet, peaceful neighborhood that has been turned into fraternity row. I've contacted you 3-4 times previously asking for help.

I am AGAIN writing to urge you to quickly take action to curb the short-term rental problem in Los Angeles, and relieve the pressure it is putting on our neighborhoods.

I live in an older home, a duplex, built in 1917. Three years ago my offsite landlord converted the upstairs unit of the house in which I live – into a vacation unit. The noise level (no insulation in older home) is unbearable and beyond words. I have spent many nights sleeping in my garage. These people are on vacation. I, however, must wake up and work.

In addition to extremely loud noise levels and general chaos, I do not feel safe. I have no idea who is upstairs on any given day or week. I am forced to share common space with people I don't know -- rude people -- I don't want to know. The landlord doesn't even know who they are or how many people he/she has living above me. I don't know if they have been screened properly or if I am sharing physical space with a rapist, pedophile, murderer or a thief.

At least once a week, a confused or drunken vacation renter enters my house, by mistake, I assume. This is a VERY dangerous situation for a single woman who happens to own a weapon for protection.

In the past year, we have had two burglaries -- that may or may not -- have been connected to the revolving door of vacation renters. In February, short-term renters "accidentally" poisoned my dog. In March, there was a physical altercation in that unit; neighbors who believed domestic abuse had occurred called the LAPD. I have had been threatened numerous times by male vacation renters.

In early May, there were at least 30 people upstairs yet the landlord claimed there were only five (5). The foot traffic caused framed photos to fall off my walls. Ceiling light bulbs fell to the floor and shattered. My bedroom-ceiling fan came crashing down. I had more damage, in one week, than I have had in every earthquake combined over the past 20 years. This house cannot hold 30 people safely. The landlord doesn't know (or doesn't care) how many people are actually renting the upstairs unit.

My neighbors complain TO ME about the noise, excess trash, screaming children, drunken people dancing on the deck at 3:00 AM, blocked garages, etc. I am NOT responsible.

Who will be held liable for a death or an injury? I strongly fear that is what is going to happen ultimately. If the city drags its feet much longer, I believe Los Angeles will incur liability for turning a blind eye.

Last month, a venture capitalist purchased one of the units in the building next door to me. He has turned that unit, 11 Buccaneer St., Unit 3 into a vacation rental property. I am now officially surrounded by illegal hotels and by people who actually frighten me.

I have been complaining about living under an illegal hotel for nearly three years. NO ONE will help. I cannot afford to move; in fact, I am hemorrhaging money because I cannot find a roommate willing to live under 'what sounds like' a Gymboree with a bowling alley. I certainly would move if I could afford it. Even if I could afford to move, the rental property inventory is very scarce because everyone is turning his/her home or apartment into a short-term, vacation rental.

As for "playing whack-a-mole" and not being able to catch or prove the units are being illegally rented, I have collected pages of audio recordings, texts from landlord, and photos of renters, which prove I live under an illegal vacation unit. It isn't difficult to obtain.

I ask that you put neighborhoods first, support enforcement of existing zoning and occupancy laws that prohibit short-term rentals, and craft legislation that protects affordable housing, RSO housing, the stability of our communities and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Heidi Ifft  
17 Buccaneer St.  
Marina Del Rey, CA 90292  
(310) 827-0930

The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-S2, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmembers Bonin and Huizar,

I've lived in Los Angeles off and on for almost 15 years. I've tried to make it work with other cities, but I always wind up back in what always felt the most like home. But lately it's a hostile place for creative types like me. As a freelance patternmaker serving the apparel industry, I struggle to get clients willing to pay more than the rate I've been charging since 2005.

So with rents skyrocketing and so little housing available, it's becoming impossible for me to live here. I've even gone so far as to start looking for work in Portland, to be one of the many creatives migrating outside of California in search of affordable housing. I first moved here to attend FIDM in 1990. It was so easy to find a nice place to live in a good neighborhood, and I knew so many people getting by on almost nothing, because LA was a city where you could show up with nothing more than a dream and carve out a life for yourself. Not anymore.

I am writing to urge you to quickly take action to curb the short-term rental problem in Los Angeles, and relieve the pressure it is putting on our neighborhoods. **I really like the plan you outlined, which I read about recently. I am so happy that you're trying to fix this problem.**

At the peak of the market in 2007, I sold my Silverlake condo to go to business school, hoping to return to LA and get the sort of job that would enable me to buy a home in the hills in my favorite city. Things changed a lot over those two years, and the job market disappeared. I made my way back to LA anyway, knowing I could always find work in fashion. I discovered how much DTLA had improved and was so excited to live there and enjoy the absolute most DIVERSE neighborhood I'd ever seen in Los Angeles. Having lived here during the riots, I cherish anything that fosters diversity in LA. Downtown's relationship with Skid Row, our growing Metro rail system, the great streets initiative you just approved (thank you!!!) all foster diversity & inclusion. I have often said that I think NYC has such better racial integration than LA because everyone rides the subway together. People sitting alone in cars only serves to make us hate each other. That diversity is threatened by Airbnb, by greedy landlords trying to focus only on tourist and party rentals.

The cost of living here is also being ruined by short-term rentals, as well as a host of other factors. I've been priced out of downtown since I moved there in 2010, and now live in a decrepit, squalid apartment in Frogtown with one of the few landlords who isn't trying to rob tenants. She's lovely, but I really miss being able to walk to work, or chat with my neighbors in the rooftop Jacuzzi, or even wash my dishes in a dishwasher.

While plenty of apartment buildings forbid sub-leasing, there are some downtown apartment buildings (I've heard) that are focused primarily on Airbnb! Plus renting entire homes out destroys the home-buying market for people who can buy homes they actually want to live in. They're pitted against investors with wads of cash, many of whom don't even live in America, but take their rental income and

spend it all in China. That's one of the quickest ways to improve our economy- don't just hardline short-term rentals, tax real estate investors so much they won't want to bother.

I ask that you put neighborhoods first, support enforcement of existing zoning and occupancy laws that prohibit short-term rentals, and craft legislation that protects affordable housing, RSO housing, the stability of our communities and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Thank you SO MUCH for caring about the PEOPLE of LA!

Sincerely,  
Susanna Schick, MBA  
Sustainable Fashion LA  
2852 Rosanna St #3  
Los Angeles, CA 90039



August 24, 2015

The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Short-Term Residential Rentals  
Council File #14-1635-S2**

Dear Councilmember Bonin:

This letter is submitted on behalf of “Keep Neighborhoods First,” a coalition of neighbors, tenants, and affordable housing proponents who are concerned about short-term rentals and their effect on Los Angeles’ residential communities. We would first like to thank you for bringing attention to this matter, and recognizing the need to effectively regulate short-term rentals, as other neighboring cities such as Santa Monica and West Hollywood have done. This is an important first step toward protecting our valuable housing stock, reining in the growing concentration of commercially-operated short-term rentals, and protecting our diverse residential communities.

In the past five years, the proliferation of short-term rental websites such as AirBnB, VRBO, and Home Away have made it easier for property owners in desirable destination cities to connect with vacationers who are willing to pay inflated nightly rates. We do not oppose legitimate home-sharing where the rental is a couch or spare bedroom, and the owner is present in their primary residence. However, that is not occurring in the majority of L.A.’s short-term rentals. Most bookings are whole-unit listings by quasi-professional leasing agents masquerading as hosts.

The growth of this industry does not come without serious negative impacts – both long and short-term – to the fabric of our city. Popular neighborhoods such as Venice, Echo Park, Hollywood, and Silver Lake are being overrun by short-term rentals pushing out the very locals who make the community desirable. Commercial investors are quickly stockpiling our city’s affordable housing to get a piece of the pie. And, quality hospitality jobs are being threatened by the use of lower paying, unprotected, domestic workers. As this issue moves forward through the legislative process, we urge you to keep the following concerns in consideration:

**I. The Toll on Housing**

Affordable housing is the bedrock of our communities, but as we already know, Los Angeles has the least affordable rental market in the country and the second-least affordable region for middle-class



families looking to buy a home.<sup>1</sup> The Los Angeles Department of City Planning's latest Housing Needs Assessment reported that the city must build an additional 3,500 units of affordable housing *each year* to keep pace with the backlogged demand. Unfortunately, the city is only averaging approximately 1,100 units built per year since 2006. If you are an Angeleno looking for an affordable place to live, the only thing more troubling than these figures is the latest threat to affordable housing: short-term rentals and illegal rogue hotel operators.

Short-term rentals have had and will continue to have a disastrous effect on the supply of housing at all income levels if left unchecked. Property owners who rent out for short terms often stand to make a substantial amount of money – certainly more than if they rented to long-term tenants. This creates a tremendous financial incentive for landlords to take units off the rental market and convert them to short-term rentals. This is big business, and more money can be made in a few days than with a lessee of 12 months or more. With Gold Rush frenzy, long-time tenants are being harassed to leave their homes and entire RSO-controlled buildings are being converted into de facto hotels complete with lock boxes and maid service. It was recently reported that approximately 10,943 housing units have been removed from our housing stock and converted into short-term rentals.<sup>2</sup> At the current rate of affordable housing construction, it would take decades to recover from this deficit. In Venice alone, there are 1,428 AirBnB listings, all without public approval.<sup>3</sup> An astonishing 78.3% of those listings are entire homes and apartments.<sup>4</sup> These rentals are so lucrative that they are dramatically affecting the supply of apartments as units are pulled off the rental market and put into the tourist market.

If short-term rental platforms continue to proliferate, we will continue to see our housing supply constrict and rental costs rise. Perhaps most importantly, we stand to completely diminish Los Angeles' valuable RSO housing stock. Investors are profiteering from the short-term rental of RSO units, making the affordable housing shortage in Los Angeles that much more acute. Rent-controlled tenants are being evicted not to make way for owners, but to make way for tourists. Unfortunately, the neighborhoods that are most popular with vacationers and short-term renters are also the neighborhoods with the highest rents and low rental vacancy. In other words, the areas in Los Angeles that are now the least affordable to live are becoming even more unaffordable because of short-term rentals.

## **II. Where Goes the Neighborhood?**

While property owners and middle men commercial operators may be cashing in on the new "sharing economy," Los Angeles' residential neighborhoods are bearing the brunt of the impact. Residential zones are intended to provide families with a quiet living environment, free of commercial and industrial activities. However, short-term rentals have replaced that quiet environment with noise, anxiety about personal safety, and the nuisance of a steady parade of transients who have no investment in the neighborhood.

Hard-working Angelenos who never intended to live next to a hotel must now contend with loud music at all hours of the night, littering, increased traffic, parking deficiencies, and partying vacationers 24

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<sup>1</sup> Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies

<sup>2</sup> LAANE, "AirBnB, Rising Rent, and the Housing Crisis in Los Angeles," March 2015 - <http://www.laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/AirBnB-Final.pdf>, Addendum August 2015

<sup>3</sup> [www.insideairbnb.com/los-angeles/index.html](http://www.insideairbnb.com/los-angeles/index.html)

<sup>4</sup> Id.

hours a day, 7 days a week. But, it's not only living next to a hotel, but a hotel without any employees to fix the problem. In normal situations, neighbors would be able to discuss the issue, mitigate whatever problems exist, and handle things. In most short-term rental cases though, the property owner is simply not present. Neighbors are left with a deteriorating community and no tools to rectify the situation.

Furthermore, the loss of community, diversity and neighborhood integrity brings significant public safety concerns that cannot be ignored. A procession of unfamiliar faces undermines the "neighborhood watch," and makes the community more susceptible to increased crime. Also, residents in most rental properties are carefully screened prior to occupancy with credit and background checks. This is not the case with short term renters who, in almost every case, hardly give any information about themselves before renting a house or adjacent apartment. The security risk of distributing gate codes and allowing strangers into a building makes short-term rentals a tremendous security and safety concern.

### **III. The Effect on the Local Economy and Hospitality Jobs**

If short-term rental bookings and listings continue to increase, hotels may be forced to lower their average rates to increase their occupancy and remain competitive. Good-paying hospitality jobs may be lost as a consequence of this new surge of unregulated competition. It is estimated that if all AirBnb units in Los Angeles were hotel rooms, they would employ more than 7,400 hotel workers earning an average of \$14.07/hr.<sup>5</sup> Instead, however, domestic workers earning far below living wage are tasked with home cleaning duties in short-term rentals – likely without healthcare and other employment benefits commonly enjoyed by hospitality workers. This shrinks the pie, weakens a family's financial security, and decreases the amount of dollars poured into the economy – all translating into less jobs for other Angelenos.

### **IV. Special Coastal Zone Provisions – Mello Act**

As you are aware, the Mello Act is a state law that went into effect in 1992 to increase and protect the supply of affordable housing along California's Coastal Zone. Per Government Code Section 65590(c) of the Act, local governments may not approve a project that will replace existing residential units with non-residential uses unless it finds that a residential use is no longer feasible at the project site or the new use is Coastal-Dependent. This rule applies to both market-rate and affordable units. If the city approves the project, then any existing affordable housing units must be replaced one-for-one.

It is apparent that allowing short-term rentals to take over rental housing within the Coastal Zone is a direct violation of the Mello Act and the City's Interim Administrative Procedures. In the case of short-term rentals, the existing residential units are converted to a non-residential, non-Coastal-Dependent use with a clear commercial purpose. Without immediate enforcement of these Mello Act violations, Venice and other impacted coastal neighborhoods will continue to suffer a disastrous loss of housing at all income levels.

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<sup>5</sup> LAANE, "AirBnB, Rising Rent, and the Housing Crisis in Los Angeles," March 2015 - <http://www.laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/AirBnB-Final.pdf>

As you can see, the growth of short-term rentals goes beyond non-compliance and lost revenue. There is no amount of revenue that can replace the housing that has already been lost. Furthermore, any revenue collected will not be sufficient to support full compliance and enforcement and replace the 10,943 units that have already been converted. We are eager to work with you to create an ordinance that protects housing, addresses neighborhood concerns, and provides a framework to ensure effective enforcement. We thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to continue working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith Goldman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judith "Judy" Goldman  
Keep Neighborhoods First

Cc: Mayor Eric Garcetti  
City Attorney Mike Feuer  
Councilmember Paul Krekorian  
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield  
Councilmember David Ryu  
Councilmember Paul Koretz  
Councilmember Nury Martinez  
Councilmember Felipe Fuentes  
Councilmember Marqueece Harris Dawson  
Councilmember Curren Price  
Councilmember Herb Wesson  
Councilmember Mike Bonin  
Councilmember Mitch Englander  
Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell  
Councilmember Jose Huizar  
Councilmember Joe Buscaino

July 28, 2015

The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-S2, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmember Bonin,

I am a life-long Angeleno, born and raised. I have lived here in Silver Lake for 19 years with my husband who is a born and raised Silver Lake resident. My mother-in-law still lives in Silver Lake a mile from us.

I am writing to strongly urge you to help the law-abiding citizens of residential Los Angeles. Please draft enforceable, and concise laws and rules in regards to short-term rentals. Currently, as you and I know, these type of rentals are in violation of current zoning laws and it is out of control. I urge you to quickly take action to curb the short-term rental problem in Los Angeles, and relieve the pressure it is putting on our neighborhoods.

In spite of the fact that short-term rentals violate zoning laws, most of these rentals are not being forced to comply with the law for some reason beyond my thinking. This non-enforcement has caused "fights" in neighborhoods. In fact, in my "fight", I was the victim of the owners of a short-term commercial Airbnb house. The host/owners of the property once came to my front gate and started yelling at me. They also falsely called the police on another neighbor of mine. These Airbnb host/owners do not even live at the Airbnb rental property here in Silver Lake. Last year, the wife/Airbnb host and an unknown male rang my doorbell and banged on my front gate, but I ignored them and called the police. I wasn't sure what she intended to do to me. These owners filed a false TRO against me back in August 2014, and the case was dismissed against me. It cost me \$3800 in attorney's fees. But this is what this TRO was: an act of intimidation, vindictiveness and revenge against me and my entire neighborhood because we filed complaints against them with the City and LADBS. This is so unfair. They are breaking the law and they take me to court! This gives you a glimpse into the state of mind of these short-term rental hosts. They will say and do almost anything to maintain their illegal income including, in this case, commit perjury.

Many of the Airbnb hosts are the most shameless, unapologetic, egregious, selfish, money-hungry people that I have ever heard that has decided to break the law and try to justify in so many ways. Whatever happened to my right to live in a residential area?

I moved here 19 years ago into a residential area, not a commercial zone. This is so unfair to me and my neighbors. When are my City Councilmembers going to support me and my neighbors who live here in residential areas? Please do it now, please.

I personally would not commit a crime because of financial difficulty. There are other resources available to law abiding citizens. But the majority of the short-term Airbnb hosts are willing to break the law unabashedly. And most are not in financial difficulty at all. They know that few of them are prosecuted or forced to comply, so they have no fear about breaking this law. You give them an inch, they take a mile. They feel as if they have a right to operate illegally. Well, it is an outrage to me! Look at the problems in San Francisco as a warning to Los Angeles. Most hosts are not people in financial straights as is the common "story" told by Airbnb, a company that claims to be worth \$20 billion. Most listings here in Los Angeles area are called "Entire home/apt" which tells you that they are NOT renting out a room in their own homes, but rather are making income on commercial rentals, and are not "home-sharing". It is time for them to "grow up" and be responsible for their own financial situations like the rest of society. It is not fair for people with means to use the internet and their smart phones to make money like this. How many hosts are really people with financial difficulty? And how many are affluent people making money on this illegal activity? Having financial difficulty does not give a person a "get out of jail free" card. Are they allowed to break the law?

I ask that you put neighborhoods first, support enforcement of existing zoning and occupancy laws that prohibit short-term rentals, and craft legislation that protects affordable housing, RSO housing, the stability of our communities and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

My heart is broken. I have loved living here in Silver Lake for 18 years, but the past 14 months has been very stressful and upsetting for me because of the Airbnb rental house and their owners.

Thank you for your consideration. Feel free to call me if you want to know more.

Sincerely,

Jane Taguchi  
1963 Redesdale Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90039

See photos attached below. I put them here to give you a feel for what it is like to live across the street from a "hotel", aka Airbnb rental. Unfortunately, I could not take any night photos because I don't have such a camera.

The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-S2, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmember Bonin,

My name is James Adams. I write to you as a musician, teacher, and neighborhood activist that has lived in Venice for eighteen years.

I am writing to urge you to quickly take action to curb the short-term rental problem in Los Angeles, and relieve the pressure it is putting on our neighborhoods.

I am one of the few people in this world for whom Venice is not a travel destination. I grew up here, surrounded by all of the madness and all of the beauty.

My dad, my sister and I joined the Venice community in 1996. Even back then, our barely affordable apartment stood in the shadow of beach-side luxury mansions. However, unlike similar homes in opulent areas of LA, these monoliths of gentrification represented merely the upper echelons of an economically diverse community. Accomplished psychologists lived right next door to impoverished, eccentric painters. Hippies and radicals of all stripes shared the block with well-to-do families. My dad, a humble sound engineer and song writer, lived a few houses away from Wesley Snipes.

Despite their differences, these people shared one thing in common: like my dad, they dared more than just a visit to what was, at that time, a less-than-safe bohemian community. They made themselves a permanent part of it.

Over the last eighteen years, I've watched them struggle to preserve the Venice they came for. As our beachy bohemia attracted more tourists every summer, Venice locals fought bitterly to stem the tide of new hotels and amenities that accommodated vacationers at the expense of community members. Like countless other local families, we benefited from their efforts without even realizing it. Had they failed and a hotel showed up right next door, we may have quickly become activists ourselves.

Now many of us find that, without any warning, a hotel has indeed showed up right next door. Sites like Airbnb, Homeaway, and VRBO make it absurdly easy to turn any neighborhood space into a tourism commodity. Though these businesses make profit their top priority, the idea behind them is not inherently evil. Some who use these services are merely continuing a long tradition of the couch surfing culture. They invite travelers into their homes for a more human and integrated experience. They take responsibility for their guests, and teach them to be a temporary part of the Venice community. I have never charged a guest for this privilege, but I don't blame those who do so.

Then there are the others. These others use the internet to turn local homes into year-round hotels. They rent or buy property not so that they can become part of our community, but so that they can exploit it. They reap the rewards of a local culture that they help to disintegrate. My culture. Our culture. Every new home that they convert into a hotel is one less artist, one less actor, one less kind

hearted lawyer, one less bohemian banker. One less family. One less kid like me. One less guy like my dad.

Thanks to eighteen years of friendship and participation in this community, I live in one of the few rent-controlled apartment buildings still available to long-term tenants. I frequently overhear my new neighbor, Josh, bragging about the Venice apartment he is "Airbnb-ing" full time. I see him, this-flesh-and blood representative of the so called "sharing economy," and I know that a time will soon come when I, too, will be fighting off eviction attempts. I know that my wife and I will lose our home. Unless...unless we can change that story. Unless we can come together and teach the Joshes of the world the consequences of their actions. Unless we can show City Hall the truth behind Airbnb's billion-dollar PR scheme. Unless we can show them the alienation and suffering that have become our reality. **Unless every internet platform that throws its hands in the air and says "I'm just the middle man" takes responsibility for what it enables.**

I ask that you put neighborhoods first, support enforcement of existing zoning and occupancy laws that prohibit short-term rentals, and craft legislation that protects affordable housing, RSO housing, the stability of our communities and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
James Adams  
20 29<sup>th</sup> ave. , Venice, CA, 90291

To: Councilperson Mike Bonin  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, Ca 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-S2, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmember Bonin:

I've been a resident of Silver Lake for almost 5 decades. I've seen the ups and downs and ups again of this fantastic neighborhood and am grateful my parents had the opportunity to raise their four children in a truly residential community.

We were one of the first African American families to live in Silver Lake and I've been fortunate to witness the encouraging transition of a historically restricted community to an extremely diverse, warm and welcoming one, where neighbors care and look out for each other.

Unfortunately, the popularity of AirBnB and other on-line short term rental sites, weakens the fabric of our neighborhood and is quickly threatening the precious quality of life we work so hard to achieve.

There are over 400 Silver Lake homes, condos and apartments listed on AirBnB. There are three homes used for short term rentals within 500 feet of my home. Short term rentals have caused a serious shortage of affordable housing and rent controlled apartments throughout Silver Lake and other largely residential communities in Los Angeles. The erosion of quality of life characteristics of residential neighborhoods is moving at an alarming pace, with "hosts" flipping the figurative finger to zoning restrictions with impunity.

I'm asking the council and all pertinent city agencies and departments, to enforce city ordinances and zoning laws which so wisely prohibit short term rentals in residential communities. To even consider STR regulations is unrealistic unless the city simultaneously hires additional police officers, neighborhood prosecutors, building and safety investigators and housing authority agents to handle, investigate and prosecute those who will willingly ignore any future STR regulations just as they currently ignore zoning ordinances purely for their own financial gain.

Why cater to those who so willfully break the law? Please pay attention to the thousands who are forced to deal with the daily assault on residential neighborhoods and the infringement on our quality of life, with little to no help from our elected representatives.

Sincerely,  
Anne-Marie Johnson  
Life Long Silver Lake Resident  
<[kawalkid@earthlink.net](mailto:kawalkid@earthlink.net)>



July 29, 2015

E. Anne Bagasao for Mary  
M. Bagasao 1136  
W.Edgeware Road  
Los Angeles, CA 90026

The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-S2, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmember Bonin,

My name is Anne Bagasao. I am writing to you on behalf of my mother, Mrs. Mary Bagasao, to beseech the City Council of Los Angeles to take swift action with regard a ban of the illegal short term rental business in Los Angeles.

I could go on and on about code violations, lack of tax revenue, the impact on our hotel industry workers and the negative effect that this "shared economy" industry has on our already strained housing market but these are not the issues my mother would address if she could do so for herself. I am speaking on her behalf because she is legally blind and is 89 years old. She is currently in the hospital after being homebound with full time care in her home which she owns in Angeleno Heights, Council District 13. She plans to return to her home of 27 years to remain at peace and comfort until she dies. She has been a tax payer, a business owner and a property owner in Los Angeles since 1947 and she deserves your attention!

This is her story. After my mother was released from the hospital in April she opted to return home. My brother was travelling, so my sister and I were charged with her overnight care. After just one night in my mother's home, I discovered that a zoned R2 house located just feet from the room in which my daughter and I had hoped to sleep was occupied by at least a dozen people who were partying in the pool until 4am. I had seen carloads of people enter the property earlier in the day, and thought that perhaps they were new tenants or it was an open house. The next morning I approached a man who was standing on the balcony just across from my mother's front porch and asked him if he lived there. He said no and that they were just visiting from out of town. I then asked if it was a vacation rental and he said "yes."

Right away I was able to google search "short term rental Echo Park" and within seconds located what I soon learned was one of several management companies that are booking the property. I spoke with a gentleman at the company, Luxpads.com, and voiced my complaint against their guests. He graciously informed me that those were not his clients who were occupying the house and that I should know that the house is listed with several other short term rental services.

With the continual bookings at 1132 West Edgeware Road my mother and her caregiver are subject to night after night of loud music, trash on the street, cars parked so as to block the sidewalk or hang over into my mother's driveway. Because there is a pool, there are sometimes up to 20 people partying

outside until the very early morning hours without any consideration for those of us who live and work and pay taxes in the City of Los Angeles. The property owner has removed the address numbers from the house and curb so when I call the police I have to describe the house and give them an address which they can't technically find. There is no manager who oversees the property and therefore no one to complain to.

One day after delivering some groceries to my mother, I encountered a man in front of the house who identified himself "as the guy with the keys". I let him know that his short term renters were causing a nuisance and that the property is not zoned for commercial operation and is in violation of city code. He knows my mother and knows that she lives alone and is elderly. He asked me if I thought she would "mind" if there was a party with loud music at the pool over the summer. I informed him that unless he was the owner or the tenant that any other use of the house in exchange for money was illegal; and that any event of that nature would need to be permitted with LAPD and Building & Safety. He had no response and the illegal activity has continued.

The house at 1132 West Edgeware Road is permitted for five bedrooms and four bathrooms but it is listed with the short term rental brokers as six bedrooms and six bathrooms. Also, it has parking for two cars in the garage but generally there are six or seven that take up parking in the street in front of my mother's house.

We've called police to report the noise and spoken with desk officers at Rampart but we live an area where homicide reports consume the majority of LAPD's time and it's impossible to get a unit to respond. I have contacted Building & Safety but have not had a response to my correspondence. The only luck I have in getting anyone to respond to my outcries has been with Parking Enforcement. Since learning about the illegal operation at 1132 W. Edgeware Road, my older brother has become disabled and will be undergoing treatment for brain and lung cancer. His wish is to remain in his home where he has lived for the past 27 years. His bedroom window is but a mere 20 feet from the house and pool in question. How will he be able to have the peace, privacy and calm that he will need to recover, in his home if the City of Los Angeles allows this hotel/party venue to operate?

My mother and father purchased their home at 1136 W. Edgeware Road in Echo Park in 1987 with the promise of someday seeing an increase in their investment enough to support them in their old age and to be able to always have a family home for their three children. My mother has endured the many changes, good and bad, that our community has undergone in the last decade with the proliferation of the growth of Downtown and watching homes which once housed families now filled with 30-something renters who have little or no connection to our community.

In 2007, we had to hire an attorney to represent my mother when the builder/property owner of 1132 W. Edgeware encroached on her property and removed brush and trees without her permission. I am hesitant to push the issue with the owner any further because he had physically threatened my mother in the past and I don't want to further jeopardize her health and safety. You can see, therefore Councilman, why her situation is especially fragile. We are concerned now that if we should need to sell my mother's home to cover her long term care that the presence of a party house next door will devalue the property. If we rent it will our tenants will be subject to the same unlivable conditions? But, more importantly, Councilman Bonin, why do homeowners who wish only to live and rest and grow old in their homes that they have worked so hard for their entire lives, have to suffer because of a handful of greedy citizens who have no consideration for the law or community?

We have no one else to turn to at this point. So, on behalf of my mother, Mary Bagasao , my brother Brad Bagasao and all the elderly and disabled home owners and residents of Los Angeles who are being negatively impacted by this gross abuse of the titans of the short term rental industry, I ask you all to do right by us. Follow the lead of other great cities like San Francisco and soon New York and help us by banning the use of single family homes for vacation and short term rentals, restricting the use of individual apartment units for short term rentals and preventing developers and short term rental companies from converting multi-unit housing for the purpose of short-term rentals.

Do the right thing, please. Hear our voices and not just the jangle of the change in the pockets of those who take and think only for themselves. I thank you in advance of your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Anne Bagasao  
For Mary, M. Bagasao, Homeowner

# LIGHTHOUSE Investments

INVESTMENT/DEVELOPMENT  
PRIVATE EQUITY/ASSET MANAGEMENT

August 24, 2015

City of Los Angeles  
Planning and Land Use Management Committee  
ATTN: Sharon Dickinson - Legislative Assistant  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**VIA EMAIL**  
[Sharon.Dickinson@lacity.org](mailto:Sharon.Dickinson@lacity.org)

**RE:** Council File 14-1635-S2 – Proposed Short Term Rental Motion

Chairman Jose Huizar  
Contact: Chief of Staff Paul Habib  
[paul.habib@lacity.org](mailto:paul.habib@lacity.org)

Vice Chairman Marqueece Harris Dawson  
Contact: Chief of Staff Solomon Rivera  
[solomon.rivera@lacity.org](mailto:solomon.rivera@lacity.org)

Honorable Mitch Englander  
Contact: Chief of Staff John Lee  
[john.s.lee@lacity.org](mailto:john.s.lee@lacity.org)

Honorable Gil Cedillo  
Contact: Chief of Staff Arturo Chavez  
[arturo.chavez@lacity.org](mailto:arturo.chavez@lacity.org)

Honorable Felipe Fuentes  
Contact: Chief of Staff Rebecca Valdez  
[rebecca.valdez@lacity.org](mailto:rebecca.valdez@lacity.org)

Dear PLUM Committee Members:

As a 34 year resident of Los Angeles, former Chair of a Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee and a small business owner that owns some independent hotels in Los Angeles, we oppose any motion that would legalize short term rentals, in fact, we would ask the City (as other cities have done, like Santa Monica) to take a tougher stance against these illegal hotels.

We would like the City to adopt the following:

- **Land Use** – Short term rental (under 30 days) allowed only if underlying land use allows it (ie. C zones).
- **Taxes** – Those that are allowed under current land use, license their business and pay transient occupancy tax like any other hotel to fund City services, as is the reason for TOT.
- **Home Sharing** – Adopt Santa Monica's model which only allows home sharing if primary homeowner is present or the original model of Airbnb and others.
- **Data Sharing** – Airbnb and other home sharing services must share data so that City can enforce the law, otherwise City and residents will be left with enforcement duty.
- **Enforcement** – With the above data, ordinance provides for penalties and enforcement officers to check compliance with ordinance.
- **Rules & Regulations** – Hosts comply with all other rules affecting short term rentals such as Environmental Health inspections, insurance, business licenses etc.

LIGHTHOUSE INVESTMENTS, LLC

If Airbnb and others are really about the sharing economy and not the illegal hotel economy, the above shall provide them ample opportunity to allow hosts to serve guests.

A few reasons why City of LA has to take a strong stance:

- **Largest City in the County** – Santa Monica has set precedence, LA must follow.
- **Wages** – LA has already impacted the hotel industry with Living Wage and Minimum Wage, hosts don't employ anyone so they can undercut any legal hotel.
- **Housing** – Even if one rents their unit for 120 days, that is 1/3 of the year, that can take thousands of units away from people who actually live in their units full time. The housing crisis is a major issue in Los Angeles and this simply makes it significantly worse.
- **Loss of Jobs** – Hotels employ a lot of hard working people with good wages, Airbnb hosts do not employ anyone and take demand from legitimate hotels or new hotel development that can create more high paying jobs.
- **Unsafe** – There are lots of stories of guests having bad experiences at hotels but hotels are owned and operated by companies, you don't hear of stories of hotel guests being taken hostage by hotel owners but these happen to guests of Airbnb. Does an Airbnb host have a fire alarm like a hotel? No, they do not.
- **ILLEGAL** – It is fundamentally illegal, City should enforce its own laws, just because it's a technology company doesn't mean it should be allowed. What if someone comes up with an app that allows bars in homes, should City and ABC simply allow it cause it's the "sharing" economy? NO.

Many have compared it with Uber and Lyft, those comparisons are fundamentally flawed. Uber and Lyft face City licensing issues, not land use issues, Uber has many driver's that are licensed as limos, the technology simply allows people to hail them differently than calling them. While there are some driver's that don't have proper City licenses, it is still a licensing issue, not land use.

Land use is a critical factor in any City and fundamentally creates or disrupts resident's enjoyment of their neighborhoods and/or enhances or exacerbates housing costs. Some ordinances allow density near transit areas, some prohibit large homes but none allow illegal usage.

This is not an experiment, its real and affecting neighborhoods, business owners, hotel guests and hotel employees. I hope PLUM will take a firm stance as City of Santa Monica has done in preserving its land use plans that have been diligently put together with decades of work by politicians, planners, neighborhood groups and residents.

Sincerely,

Ramin Kolahi  
Principal

CC: Hon. Paul Koretz  
Councilmember District 5  
[paul.koretz@lacity.org](mailto:paul.koretz@lacity.org)  
Joan Pelico, Chief of Staff  
[joan.pelico@lacity.org](mailto:joan.pelico@lacity.org)

Hon. Mike Bonin  
Councilmember District 11  
[mike.bonin@lacity.org](mailto:mike.bonin@lacity.org)  
Chad Molnar, Chief of Staff  
[chad.molnar@lacity.org](mailto:chad.molnar@lacity.org)  
Tricia Keane, Director of Land Use and Planning  
[tricia.keane@lacity.org](mailto:tricia.keane@lacity.org)



August 24, 2015

The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Short-Term Residential Rentals  
Council File #14-1635-S2**

Dear Councilmember Bonin:

This letter is submitted on behalf of "Keep Neighborhoods First," a coalition of neighbors, tenants, and affordable housing proponents who are concerned about short-term rentals and their effect on Los Angeles' residential communities. We would first like to thank you for bringing attention to this matter, and recognizing the need to effectively regulate short-term rentals, as other neighboring cities such as Santa Monica and West Hollywood have done. This is an important first step toward protecting our valuable housing stock, reining in the growing concentration of commercially-operated short-term rentals, and protecting our diverse residential communities.

In the past five years, the proliferation of short-term rental websites such as AirBnB, VRBO, and Home Away have made it easier for property owners in desirable destination cities to connect with vacationers who are willing to pay inflated nightly rates. We do not oppose legitimate home-sharing where the rental is a couch or spare bedroom, and the owner is present in their primary residence. However, that is not occurring in the majority of L.A.'s short-term rentals. Most bookings are whole-unit listings by quasi-professional leasing agents masquerading as hosts.

The growth of this industry does not come without serious negative impacts – both long and short-term – to the fabric of our city. Popular neighborhoods such as Venice, Echo Park, Hollywood, and Silver Lake are being overrun by short-term rentals pushing out the very locals who make the community desirable. Commercial investors are quickly stockpiling our city's affordable housing to get a piece of the pie. And, quality hospitality jobs are being threatened by the use of lower paying, unprotected, domestic workers. As this issue moves forward through the legislative process, we urge you to keep the following concerns in consideration:

#### **I. The Toll on Housing**

Affordable housing is the bedrock of our communities, but as we already know, Los Angeles has the least affordable rental market in the country and the second-least affordable region for middle-class

families looking to buy a home.<sup>1</sup> The Los Angeles Department of City Planning's latest Housing Needs Assessment reported that the city must build an additional 3,500 units of affordable housing *each year* to keep pace with the backlogged demand. Unfortunately, the city is only averaging approximately 1,100 units built per year since 2006. If you are an Angeleno looking for an affordable place to live, the only thing more troubling than these figures is the latest threat to affordable housing: short-term rentals and illegal rogue hotel operators.

Short-term rentals have had and will continue to have a disastrous effect on the supply of housing at all income levels if left unchecked. Property owners who rent out for short terms often stand to make a substantial amount of money – certainly more than if they rented to long-term tenants. This creates a tremendous financial incentive for landlords to take units off the rental market and convert them to short-term rentals. This is big business, and more money can be made in a few days than with a lessee of 12 months or more. With Gold Rush frenzy, long-time tenants are being harassed to leave their homes and entire RSO-controlled buildings are being converted into de facto hotels complete with lock boxes and maid service. It was recently reported that approximately 10,943 housing units have been removed from our housing stock and converted into short-term rentals.<sup>2</sup> At the current rate of affordable housing construction, it would take decades to recover from this deficit. In Venice alone, there are 1,428 AirBnB listings, all without public approval.<sup>3</sup> An astonishing 78.3% of those listings are entire homes and apartments.<sup>4</sup> These rentals are so lucrative that they are dramatically affecting the supply of apartments as units are pulled off the rental market and put into the tourist market.

If short-term rental platforms continue to proliferate, we will continue to see our housing supply constrict and rental costs rise. Perhaps most importantly, we stand to completely diminish Los Angeles' valuable RSO housing stock. Investors are profiteering from the short-term rental of RSO units, making the affordable housing shortage in Los Angeles that much more acute. Rent-controlled tenants are being evicted not to make way for owners, but to make way for tourists. Unfortunately, the neighborhoods that are most popular with vacationers and short-term renters are also the neighborhoods with the highest rents and low rental vacancy. In other words, the areas in Los Angeles that are now the least affordable to live are becoming even more unaffordable because of short-term rentals.

## **II. Where Goes the Neighborhood?**

While property owners and middle men commercial operators may be cashing in on the new "sharing economy," Los Angeles' residential neighborhoods are bearing the brunt of the impact. Residential zones are intended to provide families with a quiet living environment, free of commercial and industrial activities. However, short-term rentals have replaced that quiet environment with noise, anxiety about personal safety, and the nuisance of a steady parade of transients who have no investment in the neighborhood.

Hard-working Angelenos who never intended to live next to a hotel must now contend with loud music at all hours of the night, littering, increased traffic, parking deficiencies, and partying vacationers 24

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<sup>1</sup> Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies

<sup>2</sup> LAANE, "AirBnB, Rising Rent, and the Housing Crisis in Los Angeles," March 2015 - <http://www.laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/AirBnB-Final.pdf>, Addendum August 2015

<sup>3</sup> [www.insideairbnb.com/los-angeles/index.html](http://www.insideairbnb.com/los-angeles/index.html)

<sup>4</sup> Id.

hours a day, 7 days a week. But, it's not only living next to a hotel, but a hotel without any employees to fix the problem. In normal situations, neighbors would be able to discuss the issue, mitigate whatever problems exist, and handle things. In most short-term rental cases though, the property owner is simply not present. Neighbors are left with a deteriorating community and no tools to rectify the situation.

Furthermore, the loss of community, diversity and neighborhood integrity brings significant public safety concerns that cannot be ignored. A procession of unfamiliar faces undermines the "neighborhood watch," and makes the community more susceptible to increased crime. Also, residents in most rental properties are carefully screened prior to occupancy with credit and background checks. This is not the case with short term renters who, in almost every case, hardly give any information about themselves before renting a house or adjacent apartment. The security risk of distributing gate codes and allowing strangers into a building makes short-term rentals a tremendous security and safety concern.

### **III. The Effect on the Local Economy and Hospitality Jobs**

If short-term rental bookings and listings continue to increase, hotels may be forced to lower their average rates to increase their occupancy and remain competitive. Good-paying hospitality jobs may be lost as a consequence of this new surge of unregulated competition. It is estimated that if all AirBnb units in Los Angeles were hotel rooms, they would employ more than 7,400 hotel workers earning an average of \$14.07/hr.<sup>5</sup> Instead, however, domestic workers earning far below living wage are tasked with home cleaning duties in short-term rentals – likely without healthcare and other employment benefits commonly enjoyed by hospitality workers. This shrinks the pie, weakens a family's financial security, and decreases the amount of dollars poured into the economy – all translating into less jobs for other Angelenos.

### **IV. Special Coastal Zone Provisions – Mello Act**

As you are aware, the Mello Act is a state law that went into effect in 1992 to increase and protect the supply of affordable housing along California's Coastal Zone. Per Government Code Section 65590(c) of the Act, local governments may not approve a project that will replace existing residential units with non-residential uses unless it finds that a residential use is no longer feasible at the project site or the new use is Coastal-Dependent. This rule applies to both market-rate and affordable units. If the city approves the project, then any existing affordable housing units must be replaced one-for-one.

It is apparent that allowing short-term rentals to take over rental housing within the Coastal Zone is a direct violation of the Mello Act and the City's Interim Administrative Procedures. In the case of short-term rentals, the existing residential units are converted to a non-residential, non-Coastal-Dependent use with a clear commercial purpose. Without immediate enforcement of these Mello Act violations, Venice and other impacted coastal neighborhoods will continue to suffer a disastrous loss of housing at all income levels.

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<sup>5</sup> LAANE, "AirBnB, Rising Rent, and the Housing Crisis in Los Angeles," March 2015 - <http://www.laane.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/AirBnB-Final.pdf>



As you can see, the growth of short-term rentals goes beyond non-compliance and lost revenue. There is no amount of revenue that can replace the housing that has already been lost. Furthermore, any revenue collected will not be sufficient to support full compliance and enforcement and replace the 10,943 units that have already been converted. We are eager to work with you to create an ordinance that protects housing, addresses neighborhood concerns, and provides a framework to ensure effective enforcement. We thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to continue working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith Goldman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judith "Judy" Goldman  
Keep Neighborhoods First

Cc: Mayor Eric Garcetti  
City Attorney Mike Feuer  
Councilmember Paul Krekorian  
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield  
Councilmember David Ryu  
Councilmember Paul Koretz  
Councilmember Nury Martinez  
Councilmember Felipe Fuentes  
Councilmember Marqueece Harris Dawson  
Councilmember Curren Price  
Councilmember Herb Wesson  
Councilmember Mike Bonin  
Councilmember Mitch Englander  
Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell  
Councilmember Jose Huizar  
Councilmember Joe Buscaino

Heidi Ifft  
17 Buccaneer St.  
Marina Del Rey, CA 90292

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The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-S2, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmember Bonin:

My name is Heidi Ifft. I am a 40-something, professional. I work as a talent representative, managing actors. I have lived at 17 Buccaneer St. for over 20 years and I once loved my quiet, peaceful neighborhood that has been turned into fraternity row. I've contacted you 3-4 times previously asking for help.

I am AGAIN writing to urge you to quickly take action to curb the short-term rental problem in Los Angeles, and relieve the pressure it is putting on our neighborhoods.

I live in an older home, a duplex, built in 1917. Three years ago my offsite landlord converted the upstairs unit of the house in which I live – into a vacation unit. The noise level (no insulation in older home) is unbearable and beyond words. I have spent many nights sleeping in my garage. These people are on vacation. I, however, must wake up and work.

In addition to extremely loud noise levels and general chaos, I do not feel safe. I have no idea who is upstairs on any given day or week. I am forced to share common space with people I don't know -- rude people -- I don't want to know. The landlord doesn't even know who they are or how many people he/she has living above me. I don't know if they have been screened properly or if I am sharing physical space with a rapist, pedophile, murderer or a thief.

At least once a week, a confused or drunken vacation renter enters my house, by mistake, I assume. This is a VERY dangerous situation for a single woman who happens to own a weapon for protection.

In the past year, we have had two burglaries -- that may or may not -- have been connected to the revolving door of vacation renters. In February, short-term renters "accidentally" poisoned my dog. In March, there was a physical altercation in that unit; neighbors who believed domestic abuse had occurred called the LAPD. I have had been threatened numerous times by male vacation renters.

In early May, there were at least 30 people upstairs yet the landlord claimed there were only five (5). The foot traffic caused framed photos to fall off my walls. Ceiling light bulbs fell to the floor and shattered. My bedroom-ceiling fan came crashing down. I had more damage, in one week, than I have had in every earthquake combined over the past 20 years. This house cannot hold 30 people safely. The landlord doesn't know (or doesn't care) how many people are actually renting the upstairs unit.

My neighbors complain TO ME about the noise, excess trash, screaming children, drunken people dancing on the deck at 3:00 AM, blocked garages, etc. I am NOT responsible.

Who will be held liable for a death or an injury? I strongly fear that is what is going to happen ultimately. If the city drags its feet much longer, I believe Los Angeles will incur liability for turning a blind eye.

Last month, a venture capitalist purchased one of the units in the building next door to me. He has turned that unit, 11 Buccaneer St., Unit 3 into a vacation rental property. I am now officially surrounded by illegal hotels and by people who actually frighten me.

I have been complaining about living under an illegal hotel for nearly three years. NO ONE will help. I cannot afford to move; in fact, I am hemorrhaging money because I cannot find a roommate willing to live under 'what sounds like' a Gymboree with a bowling alley. I certainly would move if I could afford it. Even if I could afford to move, the rental property inventory is very scarce because everyone is turning his/her home or apartment into a short-term, vacation rental.

As for "playing whack-a-mole" and not being able to catch or prove the units are being illegally rented, I have collected pages of audio recordings, texts from landlord, and photos of renters, which prove I live under an illegal vacation unit. It isn't difficult to obtain.

I ask that you put neighborhoods first, support enforcement of existing zoning and occupancy laws that prohibit short-term rentals, and craft legislation that protects affordable housing, RSO housing, the stability of our communities and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Heidi Ifft  
17 Buccaneer St.  
Marina Del Rey, CA 90292  
(310) 827-0930

The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-52, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmembers Bonin and Huizar,

I've lived in Los Angeles off and on for almost 15 years. I've tried to make it work with other cities, but I always wind up back in what always felt the most like home. But lately it's a hostile place for creative types like me. As a freelance patternmaker serving the apparel industry, I struggle to get clients willing to pay more than the rate I've been charging since 2005.

So with rents skyrocketing and so little housing available, it's becoming impossible for me to live here. I've even gone so far as to start looking for work in Portland, to be one of the many creatives migrating outside of California in search of affordable housing. I first moved here to attend FIDM in 1990. It was so easy to find a nice place to live in a good neighborhood, and I knew so many people getting by on almost nothing, because LA was a city where you could show up with nothing more than a dream and carve out a life for yourself. Not anymore.

I am writing to urge you to quickly take action to curb the short-term rental problem in Los Angeles, and relieve the pressure it is putting on our neighborhoods. **I really like the plan you outlined, which I read about recently. I am so happy that you're trying to fix this problem.**

At the peak of the market in 2007, I sold my Silverlake condo to go to business school, hoping to return to LA and get the sort of job that would enable me to buy a home in the hills in my favorite city. Things changed a lot over those two years, and the job market disappeared. I made my way back to LA anyway, knowing I could always find work in fashion. I discovered how much DTLA had improved and was so excited to live there and enjoy the absolute most DIVERSE neighborhood I'd ever seen in Los Angeles. Having lived here during the riots, I cherish anything that fosters diversity in LA. Downtown's relationship with Skid Row, our growing Metro rail system, the great streets initiative you just approved (thank you!!!) all foster diversity & inclusion. I have often said that I think NYC has such better racial integration than LA because everyone rides the subway together. People sitting alone in cars only serves to make us hate each other. That diversity is threatened by Airbnb, by greedy landlords trying to focus only on tourist and party rentals.

The cost of living here is also being ruined by short-term rentals, as well as a host of other factors. I've been priced out of downtown since I moved there in 2010, and now live in a decrepit, squalid apartment in Frogtown with one of the few landlords who isn't trying to rob tenants. She's lovely, but I really miss being able to walk to work, or chat with my neighbors in the rooftop Jacuzzi, or even wash my dishes in a dishwasher.

While plenty of apartment buildings forbid sub-leasing, there are some downtown apartment buildings (I've heard) that are focused primarily on Airbnb! Plus renting entire homes out destroys the home-buying market for people who can buy homes they actually want to live in. They're pitted against investors with wads of cash, many of whom don't even live in America, but take their rental income and

spend it all in China. That's one of the quickest ways to improve our economy- don't just hardline short-term rentals, tax real estate investors so much they won't want to bother.

I ask that you put neighborhoods first, support enforcement of existing zoning and occupancy laws that prohibit short-term rentals, and craft legislation that protects affordable housing, RSO housing, the stability of our communities and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Thank you SO MUCH for caring about the PEOPLE of LA!

Sincerely,  
Susanna Schick, MBA  
Sustainable Fashion LA  
2852 Rosanna St #3  
Los Angeles, CA 90039

July 28, 2015

The Honorable Mike Bonin  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 475  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Council File #14-1635-S2, Short Term Rentals**

Dear Councilmember Bonin,

I am a life-long Angeleno, born and raised. I have lived here in Silver Lake for 19 years with my husband who is a born and raised Silver Lake resident. My mother-in-law still lives in Silver Lake a mile from us.

I am writing to strongly urge you to help the law-abiding citizens of residential Los Angeles. Please draft enforceable, and concise laws and rules in regards to short-term rentals. Currently, as you and I know, these type of rentals are in violation of current zoning laws and it is out of control. I urge you to quickly take action to curb the short-term rental problem in Los Angeles, and relieve the pressure it is putting on our neighborhoods.

In spite of the fact that short-term rentals violate zoning laws, most of these rentals are not being forced to comply with the law for some reason beyond my thinking. This non-enforcement has caused "fights" in neighborhoods. In fact, in my "fight", I was the victim of the owners of a short-term commercial Airbnb house. The host/owners of the property once came to my front gate and started yelling at me. They also falsely called the police on another neighbor of mine. These Airbnb host/owners do not even live at the Airbnb rental property here in Silver Lake. Last year, the wife/Airbnb host and an unknown male rang my doorbell and banged on my front gate, but I ignored them and called the police. I wasn't sure what she intended to do to me. These owners filed a false TRO against me back in August 2014, and the case was dismissed against me. It cost me \$3800 in attorney's fees. But this is what this TRO was: an act of intimidation, vindictiveness and revenge against me and my entire neighborhood because we filed complaints against them with the City and LADBS. This is so unfair. They are breaking the law and they take me to court! This gives you a glimpse into the state of mind of these short-term rental hosts. They will say and do almost anything to maintain their illegal income including, in this case, commit perjury.

Many of the Airbnb hosts are the most shameless, unapologetic, egregious, selfish, money-hungry people that I have ever heard that has decided to break the law and try to justify in so many ways. Whatever happened to my right to live in a residential area?

I moved here 19 years ago into a residential area, not a commercial zone. This is so unfair to me and my neighbors. When are my City Councilmembers going to support me and my neighbors who live here in residential areas? Please do it now, please.

I personally would not commit a crime because of financial difficulty. There are other resources available to law abiding citizens. But the majority of the short-term Airbnb hosts are willing to break the law unabashedly. And most are not in financial difficulty at all. They know that few of them are prosecuted or forced to comply, so they have no fear about breaking this law. You give them an inch, they take a mile. They feel as if they have a right to operate illegally. Well, it is an outrage to me! Look at the problems in San Francisco as a warning to Los Angeles. Most hosts are not people in financial straights as is the common "story" told by Airbnb, a company that claims to be worth \$20 billion. Most listings here in Los Angeles area are called "Entire home/apt" which tells you that they are NOT renting out a room in their own homes, but rather are making income on commercial rentals, and are not "home-sharing". It is time for them to "grow up" and be responsible for their own financial situations like the rest of society. It is not fair for people with means to use the internet and their smart phones to make money like this. How many hosts are really people with financial difficulty? And how many are affluent people making money on this illegal activity? Having financial difficulty does not give a person a "get out of jail free" card. Are they allowed to break the law?

I ask that you put neighborhoods first, support enforcement of existing zoning and occupancy laws that prohibit short-term rentals, and craft legislation that protects affordable housing, RSO housing, the stability of our communities and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

My heart is broken. I have loved living here in Silver Lake for 18 years, but the past 14 months has been very stressful and upsetting for me because of the Airbnb rental house and their owners.

Thank you for your consideration. Feel free to call me if you want to know more.

Sincerely,

Jane Taguchi  
1963 Redesdale Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90039

See photos attached below. I put them here to give you a feel for what it is like to live across the street from a "hotel", aka Airbnb rental. Unfortunately, I could not take any night photos because I don't have such a camera.

# LA's Airbnbs and the Betrayal of Public Trust

14 Aug 2015 Written by Tony Butka



THE CITY-Technically, "Airbnb" refers to a website where people who own homes and other properties can rent them out on a short-term basis. More generally, the term now refers to people renting out their property for a period of less than thirty days.

Like Uber and other so-called "sharing" services, the entire idea is fraught with controversy. For example, should people in a neighborhood zoned for single family homes -- the historic backbone of the City -- be able to rent out their place for a week, a day, or even overnight as a party house? Can the owner of a condo or apartment building do the same?

Right now, the whole issue of short-term room and home rentals has become a hot one in the City of Angels -- sometimes pitting homeowner against homeowner. There have been many articles, lots of frustrated homeowners, many legal questions and negative impacts on neighborhoods -- it's gotten so bad that even the Neighborhood Councils have started to weigh in with Community Impact Statements.

Fortunately, the City Council knows how to deal with Neighborhood Councils: they just start adding Council Files with extensions like -001, -002, so that they can require a new Community Impact Statement for each new file. Our Tax Dollars at work!

Now, this is what we call a REALLY BIG ISSUE: mainstream news media, nasty slimy stuff happening...something that actually requires the City Council to deal with a local issue of substance like grownups. So what do our \$200,000-a-year folks do?

Well for one thing, they have evidently muzzled the Deputy Planning Director who had the temerity to issue a Memo questioning the legality of Airbnbs -- depending on the zoning of a given neighborhood. His name is Alan Bell, but just try and find his memo -- I couldn't. Only the articles referring to its existence.

Instead, thanks to President Wesson, who made two of the three motions currently floating around concerning Airbnbs, the Council did absolutely nothing to make any public policy determination as to whether, or to what extent, the variations on these rental schemes are legal.

These enterprises produce blight, crime, and/or lower the real estate values of people unfortunate enough to live next to them. But no sir, by god, the Council wants to figure out how to TAX them, blowing off all of the homeowners in the City of Angels as so much chaff.

Build a website called *Airbnb*, pay some *bakeesh* and... "ka-ching:" the LA City Council is your friend and ally. Maybe they can get in on the IPO.

And what about our buddy, Mike Feuer, the earnest City Attorney, so beloved by the *LA Times* that they gave him a B+ grade? As usual, he's working with the developers, lobbyists, and "rental" agents to find a way to write an ordinance that will effectively screw the taxpayers that pay his salary.



If history is a guide and when a lawsuit comes along, as surely it must, he will probably subcontract the legal work to the law firms that represent the Airbnb industry.

Now, I'm not smart like the City Council, the Mayor, and the City Attorney. But I do know this -- in a legitimate government, there should be some substantive discussions about what the citizens of the various parts of the City really want. There should be a lot of community meetings and an analysis of the zoning and planning issues *before* any action is taken to give anyone a pass. You know, like taking the pulse of the various neighborhoods and trying to find a consensus. But not with our gang.

I know, I know, you think I'm making this stuff up. If only I had the imagination to do that! Unfortunately, I stopped taking mind-altering substances years ago, so I'm reduced to looking at City Council files and the actions of our elected officials. No sir, this one's real.

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Interestingly, four of the now five PLUM Committee Council members were absent from the vote on this issue (Council File 14-0600-S89.) I can't tell if they're looking for some 'extra credit' when the PLUM Committee swings into action, or just trying to distance themselves from the pushback of their neighborhoods when the citizens find out what's happening.

As background, here's a real life example of how this stuff plays out in a really neat old part of town. You know, over by Echo Park Lake, in the adjacent hills, where there are some very old and very beautiful Victorian homes. This area is protected by a HPOZ (Historic Preservation Overlay Zone.) So you would think that, at the very least, it would be immune from the Airbnb madness. Right? Wrong.

Right next to my 89 year-old mother-in-law's house, a Westside real estate developer swept in and built a 3-story, 4500 square foot (originally 4000), ugly monstrosity that was so pitifully constructed that he couldn't even sell it in an up-market. Oh yeah, he also added a swimming pool part way down the slope.

Aside from a briefcase full of violations during the building process, the HPOZ went into hibernation, along with the Building and Safety Department and everyone else involved in our city's oversight of building homes. So now, my mother-in-law has plenty of shade as she stares into the wall of the new house next door.

Lest you think I'm done with my sad story, there's more, as they say in the Ginzu commercial. Since this developer couldn't sell this turkey, he cleverly set up a bunch of cut-outs and website partners. The place is now what you and I would call a "party pad." Mostly weekends. Lots of cars, music and booze. And lots of big black vans.

Now we find out that the City's response to all of this is that they're going to pass an Ordinance to make Airbnbs legal in exchange for taxes. I can hardly wait to tell my mother-in-law. She'll be thrilled.

Actually, this all raises yet another question. If my mother-in-law ultimately decides she's had enough and wants to sell her home -- does the real estate agent have to disclose that the property is adjacent to an Airbnb?

***(Tony Butka is an Eastside community activist, who has served on a neighborhood council, has a background in government and is a contributor to CityWatch.)***

-CW

CityWatch

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