

March 26, 2015

Dear City Representative Shin:

Re: Our family's story with Home sharing via Alrbnb in the Miracle Mile Community

My name is Cari Lutz and I 've been an Airbnb host for five years. My family and I love receiving guests. It connects us with so many wonderful people from all over the world, while also allowing us to make a second part-time income to help fund our children's language-immersion education.

The income that we make from home sharing via Airbnb helps pay for our kids to go to a private Spanish immersion school, which then enables them to communicate with more Spanish-speaking people, and therefore understand and develop diverse community relations. I often use my own French and Spanish when communicating with our Airbnb guests and now I am seeing our children doing the same. It is wonderful to have these cultural exchanges with the guests.

Being Airbnb hosts also helps us to show strong support with our Miracle Mile community. Upon arrival our guests receive a list of more than 20 local restaurants, merchants, bars, and museums. Guests follow my recommendations and help support our local economy. In turn this year some of the merchants in our community have given back to the great Los Angeles. As a thank you for so many Airbnb customer recommendations, this December, one of our favorite local merchants, Miracle Mile Toys and Games, hosted a toy drive for underprivileged children.

For me, the most important part of life is connecting people with people and forever having those relationships and memories. Having Airbnb in our lives helps fulfill our goal of staying connected to and being an active part of the global community, as well as a continual economic support for our own Miracle Mile community.

Sincerely,

Cari Lutz
323 697 4370

Cc: City Clerk Sharon Dickinson

Dear Los Angeles City Council,

As Los Angeles bounds into spring, I am reminded once again why my love for this city stays stoic and why it has become my home for 30+ years. I am fortunate to own a beautiful home; one I love as I would a child and one that hugs me every day as I step past its threshold. I painstakingly renovated it from near rubble. You would say I am house-proud.

A few years back, as the economy fell into a downturn, I ran into financial hard times. The thought of losing my home was more than I could bare. My survival tactics were in full swing and I needed to find a solution. I (reluctantly) became a member of the home sharing community, Airbnb. It was the unknown that had me reluctant. How could I possibly consider bringing a stranger into my home? I had little choice but to jump into the unknown. I opened my home to visitors from all over the world - taking in guests from China, Cyprus, New York, Australia, Germany, Canada, Florida, and Indiana. How is it that this huge world could become so small with the one simple gesture of bringing a stranger into your home? Forward thinking? Not really. Taking strangers into your home has been around for as long as people have travelled. Sharing my home has done so much for me and so much for others, including the merchants in my neighborhood. Not the big box stores, but the small family businesses. I support the neighborhood bakery, dry cleaners, hair salon, yoga studio, and restaurants. I know this to be a fact as these merchants have personally thanked me for sending my guests.

It has been a full 4 years. I have maintained my home. I have upgraded the landscaping, added central A/C, rebuilt rotted driveway gates and hired a housekeeper. But more importantly it has made me a better person. I have learned compassion, patience, empathy and graciousness by the mere act of hosting. Literally opening my doors to the world has made me a proud Angeleno. My personal business has grown and recovered and my financial gain from home sharing is no longer a necessity but rather a pleasure. I look forward to the arrival of a guest: one that arrives as a stranger and leaves as a friend.

Los Angeles home sharers are the best ambassadors this city could ever think possible. Home sharing can and will be the catalyst to change the world.

I challenge city council to weigh out its options. If home sharing were to go underground, the hosts, your constituents, would face a grave danger. I can only imagine the scenarios without the security of a safe service.

Do not let Los Angeles miss a generous opportunity to strengthen its persona - a city of many cultures as diverse as the world itself. This city has much to gain with hosts opening their doors and arms to travelers of all sorts. Think of all of the rewards - quite limitless really.

Suzan F.