

Dear Councilman Bonin

I realize that there are moves to introduce legislation regarding Home Sharing in Los Angeles. I wanted to write to you to tell you how this may seriously affect my personal situation and possibly result in my not being able to afford to stay in the Condo which I bought 10 years ago, which is my home and which I love.

I am British born and work as a freelance Opera Director & Choreographer. A profession which is tremendously rewarding for myself and audiences alike. I was granted a green card in 2002 when I came to the USA to live. I was fortunate to be a guest in the house of a wonderful friend in Marina del Rey. He was tremendously generous and I have to say, experiencing such wonderful hospitality here in the US, set a fine example to me of how one should behave. Finally, I was able to find my feet and bought a Condo in Playa del Rey in 2005. It was a dream come true. Initially, I hosted friends for a few months to help me with the mortgage and property tax payments. As I am sure you are aware, working in the Arts can be precarious in terms of work contracts. In addition, the majority of my work takes me away from home, Opera being an international profession. As a result my Condo is empty for weeks at a time which can be a security risk. A couple of years later a friend introduced me to Airbnb, VRBO and home sharing. I decided to take the plunge and in so doing it has given me the security that I needed. To be quite frank, if I was not able to practise home sharing, I will most probably have to sell the Condo.

I vet my renters very thoroughly. I study previous reviews and have very strict house rules in terms of noise and the amount of people allowed in the property etc etc. The people who have come to stay are delightful and I have had many renters who come to visit their families who live close by, to visit newly born grandchildren who could not afford to go to an hotel or parents coming to take their children to Loyola Marymount or to attend their graduation. Several renters have told me that staying in my Condo is a home away from home and have returned time and time again because it is affordable and comfortable. I have introduced them to local restaurants, shops and businesses thereby promoting the local economy. A couple of friends act as my Managers (who get a percentage of the rental which helps them and their small baby) I have a housekeeper who relies on the money I pay her to clean on changeover days. I have never ever had a complaint from any neighbors.

I very much hope that you will be able to recommend a balanced solution to this situation.

Best wishes

Nicola Bowie

Dear Councilman Blumenfield,

I must be clear that I am decidedly AGAINST 14-1635. I don't doubt it might be good for hoteliers and some other big businesses, but this piece of legislation, as I see it, is bad for California, bad for small business, and certainly bad for ME. I know that the council is considering regulations on home sharing in LA, and I would like you to consider MY experiences into account as you move forward.

I have lived in my home for over 25 years, so, obviously, I endured being at the epicenter of the earthquake in 1994. (My home is less than three blocks away from the epicenter). I really love my home, and it has been the site of many wonderful community-building events, parties, and meetings.

That being said, it's expensive to own a home. I put in solar power in my home, and am currently landscaping it – to meet the needs of our lengthy drought. I'm hoping for financial help from the SoCalWaterSmart/Metropolitan Water District, but nothing is guaranteed, of course. Last month, I had to repaint part of the house, and soon will finish the job. Several thousands of dollars later, I found myself ALSO having to do some retrofitting of the foundation. As if this were not challenging enough for this month's expenses, a large pine tree died and that cost \$1500 to remove. During the summers, I generally like to visit my girlfriend – who lives in Spain. We met in high school, and then were out of contact for 30 years. I'm so happy to be able to afford to visit her.

Without the opportunity to earn a bit of money from home-sharing, many of these things simply COULD NOT HAPPEN. The relatively small amount of money that I can earn, for a few months a year – makes a HUGE difference, to me. I've really enjoyed meeting and hosting the families who've stayed at my home. One single mother, with her young daughter was leaving a bad situation back east, and was VERY grateful to have a nice home to stay in; I'm expecting a small family soon who want to stay in a real HOME, not a hotel, while the teenage boys are taking special classes nearby my house. Last summer, a father who'd been living in a hotel, stayed here with his wife and two children. I get to unite families – perhaps that's being grandiose, but ...I really don't think so. Home sharing creates a completely different energy and sense of community than hotels, motels, and the like

As I mentioned, I'm re-landscaping the front and back yards, and this is making the whole neighborhood aware of the need to get rid of lawns, and yet still keep their homes and yards ATTRACTIVE. Because it's helpful to my clients, I have created a list of local businesses that I recommend, and that they can use, which is good for everyone. Neighborhood markets, restaurants, and yes, even shopping malls (which I rarely frequent, to be honest).

I should think that allowing home-owners to gain a small amount of money is a VERY good thing, and we DO pay taxes on this income, so it helps the state out that way, too.....At the same time, I can imagine that it's affecting hotel-owners, and they are upset. (There are relatively few hotels in my area, frankly, so my fellow home-sharers are not taking business away from any hotels, anyway.)

It would be a shame, and a tragedy for me, and many of us home-owners – if this piece of legislature goes through.

I strongly urge you to vote NO on SB593.

Sincerely,
David Joyce

My airbnb story; from a resident and constituent of the Venice neighborhood. Why I believe being able to share your home only brings positives.

I am approaching the age of 50. I divorced 2 years ago after a 25 year marriage in which I was a stay at home housewife and mother. I must be honest and say the reason I initially put my house on airbnb was purely financial. I was suddenly destitute with no prospects, no career, and I found myself in a position where I could not pay my mortgage; I was heading to lose my home. Sharing my home has been the most incredible journey for me. It's allowed me to pay my way, to support my family, to have some hope for the future. It's been a life saver for me, and for many other people who are struggling with job losses, divorce, bankruptcy etc

Along with the financial benefits come so many others. I have hosted wonderful people from all over the world. Families, young travelers, elderly, and I must say that all of my experiences have been wonderful. I have met only adventurous, respectful people that are excited to explore Los Angeles and California. My guests have no negative impact on the community at all, in fact quite the opposite. I direct my guests to the locals restaurants, to local cafes, galleries, theaters and art shows. They hire cars, bikes, they go to the laundromat, the dry cleaners. I single handedly have helped support a vast array of the local businesses in my area. Sharing your home in itself does not have a negative impact on the community in any way.

I would also like to add that the bad publicity regarding renters trashing places and being disrespectful is not intrinsically linked to short term home sharing. Sometimes you just get bad tenants, whether they stay for a week, a month or a year. A bad tenant is a bad tenant. I lived next door to 4 young men who were very loud, drunken and noisy with no regard for their neighbors, and they were on a one year renewable lease, it was just terrible. This type of situation is much more disruptive to the community than a bad tenant who stays only for the weekend.

I believe Santa Monica's new laws should not be used as a precedent for other cities. Telling families they cannot rent out their house when they are away is just too harsh. I at times have volunteered abroad to help others in need; and I've only been able to do this because I'm able to rent out my home to cover my costs. I understand the need to target people that abuse the system, such as landlords who buy whole buildings with the sole idea of using them all as short term rentals. But please don't let these people ruin it for everyone. The average person only has their home, and are simply trying to make ends meet, and do good things in the community. Please let us continue to do that.

PLEASE DO NOT TAKE AWAY THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO SURVIVE, TO SUPPORT MYSELF AND MY FAMILY. I DON'T KNOW HOW I WILL MANAGE IF I CANNOT SHARE MY HOME WITH ALL THE WONDERFUL PEOPLE I'VE SO FAR MET FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. PLEASE GIVE ME A FIGHTING CHANCE TO BE INDEPENDENT AND SELF SUFFICIENT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

C. Date

Dear Councilman Koretz,

This is regarding the city's efforts to create legislation to regulate home sharing.

Home Sharing has improved my life drastically. Prior to becoming a host for Airbnb I could barely afford rent. Every year my rent would go up but my income would stay the same. After I lost my hearing to a virus, I was forced to retire from my teaching job because I couldn't understand my students. Dependent on disability, naturally, my income plummeted. If I wanted to maintain a middle class income, I had to come up with some idea to afford my apartment, pay for food, and help my daughter go through law school.

Home Sharing was the answer. My income from renting out the room my daughter once occupied made a huge difference financially in my life. I also had the opportunity to act as an ambassador to visitors from as far away as Germany, Russia, and South Africa. I've learned that if people from other nations and across our own country want to get to know Angelinos, the best way to do that is not stay in a hotel, but to rent a room in one of our homes.

Since I started Home Sharing, I've made many friends from around the US and the globe. And I'd like that experience to continue. I know the council is considering regulations on home sharing in LA. Please take my experiences into account as this legislation moves forward.

Thank you for understanding.

Sincerely,

Michael Thal

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The Abduction of Joshua Bloom

<http://amzn.to/1mTqLGP>

The Legend of Koolura:

<http://tinyurl.com/a63jamp>

Koolura and the Mystery at Camp Saddleback:

<http://amzn.to/1ifKn39>

Goodbye Tchaikovsky:

<http://tinyurl.com/bh95ht7>

Author Website:

<http://www.michaelthal.com/>

Book Trailers:

Koolura: <http://tinyurl.com/a69ysgp>

Saddleback:

<http://bit.ly/1jKliYg>

Tchaikovsky: <http://tinyurl.com/a8uc6tx>