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Re: Home Sharing

To Whom It May Concern,

As a homeowner and a property owner in the city of Los Angeles I'm writing to express my support for the various home sharing programs that have been in existence for decades; the newest and biggest player now in this field now being AirBnB.

Over the years I've been aware of Home Sharing programs through churches and student foreign exchange programs. As a homeowner it can be a struggle sometimes to make ends meet. In the past I've taken on a roommate but that was always a long term commitment and it meant I had someone staying in my home all the time. Two years ago I started participating in a few different home sharing programs and loved the ability they gave me of being able to make some extra money while not having a permanent tenant or roommate. I settled on AirBnB because I really like the system as it pre-screens travelers and offers a high quality of person with a high degree of integrity. The people that have stayed with me are polite, friendly, and responsible. Most of them, at least 90%, are here for some sort of business venture. They come for a conference or a series of meetings and every now and again I get someone who wants to visit all our wonderful tourist attractions.

I live in a transitional area of Los Angeles, Highland Park. When I first moved here it was a little rough. It still can be at times but the neighborhood is turning around. I've lived on the East side of Los Angeles for 22 years. When I moved to Highland Park I had several long time neighbors come by and thank me for moving in. I turned a modest bungalow house that was once blighted into a beautiful home. I couldn't have done that without AirBnB. I'm a home share host for the following reasons:

- 1) The income, although small, helps me pay my bills.
- 2) Any extra income helps me to improve, clean up, and beautify my home thus making my property a positive contributor to the neighborhood.
- 3) Every person that stays with me is exposed to a neighborhood they would normally probably avoid. I get to be an "ambassador" of sorts sharing all the cool and exciting things to do in this part of LA that are vastly different from the Central, South, and more popular West side. And the experience of staying with me in Highland Park challenges the preconceived ideas of how LA is and what it's people are like.
- 4) It's super fun! I meet people from all over the world! And we get to share ideas and thoughts (good, bad, and ugly) with each other and this creates some really cool relationships and friendships.

- 5) I'm proud of my neighborhood and I get to show off all the wonderful places, people, and events we have here – including local restaurants, ice cream shops, retail stores, and even attractions like the Audubon Society and the Southwest Museum that most people (even locals) don't know about.

To wrap up, my being a host through a home share type of program like AirBnB has made my life, my income, my home, and my neighborhood a better place! This betterment comes emotionally to the neighborhood through introducing people to a part of LA they probably would never see, economically through bringing shoppers/buyers to an area that needs patrons, and energetically by exposing an entire population of guests to the beautiful people and traditions that make North East LA special. It's a win-win for everyone and I hope you support the amazing energy and excitement that comes from opening up your home to new found friends and family from around the world.

Best,

Peter Bedard, MA, C.Ht.