

October 1, 2018

The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Committee of the Whole
District of Columbia City Council
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson and Members of District of Columbia City Council:

The organizations listed below wish to respectfully voice concern with the recently introduced B22-0092 - Short-Term Rental Regulation and Affordable Housing Protection Act. Our associations stand for technological innovation, we employ dozens of District residents, and have members who operate businesses in the nation's capital. We are willing to work with the city to craft a compromise solution that **removes the primary-only provision in B22-0092.**

As champions for the travel and technology sectors, we have taken pride in fostering the District's reputation as an innovative and entrepreneurial leader. We are wholly committed to improving the well-being of Washingtonians, small-business owners, visitors, students, veterans, and more in the city through technological solutions. DC has taken concerted actions to promote itself as a cultural center for business and creativity, and allowing residents to open their homes through digital platforms like Airbnb, HomeAway and VRBO to travelers enables that welcoming reputation to continue.

Vacation and short-term rental platforms including Airbnb, HomeAway, and VRBO both enhance consumer choice and enable economic opportunity for DC residents and neighborhoods. Short-term rentals spread tourism and travel dollars throughout DC's eight wards. The 20 million visitors to our nation's capital can support restaurants in Petworth, or breweries near Ivy City, or shops near Trinidad rather than just to a handful of businesses in DC's downtown core if they are allowed to stay in vacation rentals. Homeowners can use that income to pay down a mortgage, cover student loans, or save for retirement.

With Washington, DC having the fourth-highest hotel rates in the nation, a hotel stay in the city is not an option for many. Denying families affordable, convenient lodging options will unnecessarily and arbitrarily limit tourism. Extreme restrictions on short-term rentals is not only bad local policy, it is bad business policy. It sends a message that DC is not open for innovative businesses and is not a place for the technology sector to invest in.

The hotel industry is doing well in DC. They have enjoyed more than \$252 million in tax breaks over the past decade. There is plenty of room in the District's strong economy for hotels and short-term rentals to thrive. We strongly urge you to put the interests of DC residents over those of large hotel companies seeking to prevent homeowners from earning extra income through short-term rentals.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to amend B22-0092, the Short-Term Rental Regulation and Affordable Housing Protection Act, to remove the primary-only provision. We, along with our members companies, look forward to working with you to ensure that Washington, DC continues to be a leading destination for visitors, entrepreneurs, and innovative technologies in all eight wards.

Sincerely,

Consumer Technology Association

Internet Association

NetChoice

TravelTech

Consumer
Technology
Association™



Internet Association

NetChoice

TRAVEL  TECH