

From: Ben Eugene [<mailto:beneugene@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 1:11 PM
To: Ledell Zellers <ledell.zellers@gmail.com>
Subject: Support Short-Term Rentals in Madison! Vote No on Ordinance 58895

Hi Plan Commission Member Ledell Zellers,

I am a Madison resident, voter, taxpayer, and Airbnb host.

I welcome guests from around the world and share my space in Madison with them. I ask that the Plan Commission and the Common Council respect my privacy and the privacy of my guests when it comes to sharing personal information or inspecting my home.

Airbnb has a self regulating system where the spaces and property's and owners are rated. If you don't have good ratings, you don't get booked. This has a positive benefit for the property and the city in that it makes us very attentive property owners... we want our homes looking clean and nice and we of course want them to be safe for our guests. I work really hard to give people a great experience which attract my guests to local restaurants and shops and grocery stores. I want to give you just two examples of the kind of people an Airbnb attracts. Airbnb's will never replace hotels, but we do cater to a different kind of guest, one that I hope you can identify with. For my Airbnb, this is mostly family's with children, where having a separate bedroom is important for putting their kids down for naps, and where they are able to cook some of their meals in their temporary home. I have children's books, a pack and play, and other items that make their stay much more enjoyable and simply possible... in their own words, it is their home away from home. There is a family who comes every few months to visit their aged father and grandfather who is in a home nearby. For other's they come to visit their family's or their students attending the University. These family's require amenities that hotels simply don't offer.

I'd like to remind everyone that this is where the hotel and motel business was born from... people opening space in there homes, creating inns and giving travelers a temporary home.

The reasoning behind the proposals being presented today seems to be about making the TRH department simpler, but I believe these new proposed regulations will only complicate matters for everyone. People at the city level will be managing a vast amount of data, data that brings up some serious privacy concerns for all parties. Does the city require hotels to hand over to the city names and other private information such as their license plate numbers to the city? But most importantly, it puts an even greater burden on the hosts who are already doing all the work, caring for and cleaning the spaces, communicating with guests, and creating an experience for them.

I take great pride in and work really hard to create a safe and warm environment for these family's visiting and enjoying our city while visiting loved ones.

I want to share with you my reason for running an Airbnb. Besides really enjoying being a host and being able to meet people from all over the world, it also simply allows me to live in this city. As a single parent raising two children, and living in a place where we have the 4th highest property taxes in the nation (!!), running a little Airbnb on the side simply affords my family to

continue living in this town. Madison hosts already automatically pay for City and State sales and room taxes, so the city is making from me above and beyond the 4th highest property taxes I already pay. I'm not getting rich over running this Airbnb. Working full time isn't enough anymore. Our free market system and the very real need for family's visiting our city have created this opportunity, and these proposed ordinances would create extreme and unnecessary burdens for the few of us that are doing this as a means of surviving in what is becoming one of the most expensive places to live in the Midwest.

Airbnb as it is works all around the US and world. Again, these proposed rules are extremely burdensome, threaten the privacy of my guests, and is unparalleled in any other city I am aware of.

I hope the Plan Commission and Common Council will take more time to rethink these proposed rules, compare them to how other cities are managing the sharing economy, and maintain property rights for homeowners who are simply struggling to afford to stay in this city.

I support light-touch regulations that don't unnecessarily compromise privacy, curtail property rights, or unduly burden small businesses, entrepreneurs, and everyday Madisonians. Because the city already has effective noise and nuisance regulations to keep our neighborhoods safe and livable, Ordinance 58895 is not needed. Please reconsider the proposal. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Ben Eugene