

My name is Synta Keeling and I am Ward 7 resident and an Airbnb host. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I am testifying in full support of the zoning amendments allowing short-term rentals.

The Short-Term Rental Regulation Act of 2018 is a law that currently penalizes the one constituent that the law was suppose to support - that is, DC homeowners that have short-term rentals in their primary residence. This is in part because the Council chose to enact the law before appropriate changes to the zoning rules could take effect.

The ability to share my home - especially East of the Anacostia - greatly impacts me and also my neighborhood. I have been able to pay off educational loans obtained from studying in D.C. I've also been able to buy and maintain my first home. But it's the community where I live that I have seen the greatest benefit.

I live in a food desert not far from a construction pit where my neighbors and I have long been promised a grocery store that never came to be. We also have no hotels in wards 7 and 8, which, before Airbnb, had hindered our ability to draw the benefits of tourism dollars flowing into other parts of the District. With Airbnb, on average, we annually earn about \$7,100 in wards 7 and 8 from sharing our homes. When I began hosting about 4 years ago, I never expected that I

would bring visitors literally from all over the world and introduce them to a more authentic side of D.C. As you know, people often forget the genuineness and beauty of the Anacostia River communities. Certainly, some are quick to forget our gems including trails on the Anacostia river, our museums, and our national parks.

I also want you to remember the economic footprint from homesharing as you consider the amendments. My guests have patronized Ward 7 and 8 businesses such as Sala Thai and the Anacostia Arts Center. Collectively, Ward 7 and 8 hosts also have brought in millions of dollars in tax revenue - all with little involvement on the part of the DC government. It's been the hosts, who are D.C. residents bringing in that economic foot traffic. It is us who are showing the world the true beauty of the Anacostia river communities as well as the rest of Washington, D.C.

I say all of these things to emphasize to you the importance of implementing these amendments to protect where many of the owner occupied listings are - East of the Anacostia. We are not able to earn as much as listings west of the Anacostia and the current law's fines do more to discourage East of the River hosts from sharing their homes as a consequence. Hindering homesharing is a set back to us as residents and to small businesses in our neighborhoods. To that end, I also urge you to ensure greater flexibility in the zoning rules amendments to allow for future legislative changes to the Short-Term Regulation Act of 2018.

Thank you again for taking the time to listen. Thank you for addressing severe inconsistencies in the current short-term law.

