



October 17, 2019

**Testimony of Joseph Montano, Expedia Group Government Affairs Manager,
Regarding CASE NO. 19-15 (Text Amendment to Subtitles B, H, K, & U to Authorize
Short-Term Rentals)**

Good evening members of the Zoning Commission:

My name is Joseph Montano, and I am the Government Affairs Manager for Expedia Group in the District of Columbia. On behalf of Expedia Group and its family of travel brands—including vacation rental leaders Vrbo and HomeAway—I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and respectfully request that you authorize short-term rentals in residential zones as permitted under D.C. Law 22-307.

Across North America, Expedia Group is supporting efforts toward fair, commonsense, and evidence-based regulation of the short-term rental industry and is committed to fostering an affordable, accessible, and responsible short-term rental marketplace in compliance with local regulations.

For nearly three decades, Vrbo and our local homeowners have been focused on serving traveling families. In fact, our average customer booking travel on our platform is a 50-year-old woman traveling with a family of four. That focus on responsible travel translates to our collaborative approach to fair and effective policies. Policies that achieve high levels of compliance while respecting the long-standing tradition of opening our homes to traveling families.

It is for this reason that we were disappointed with the City Council's approach to legislating short-term rentals in the District of Columbia. D.C. Law 22-307 failed to account for traveling families who enjoy having access to a diverse set of accommodation options. According to a recent poll, two-thirds of Americans believe that short-term vacation rentals provide a valuable alternative to traditional hotel lodging. Vacation rentals are such an important option that a third of Americans would be less inclined to visit a city if it banned short-term rentals. Unfortunately, D.C. Law 22-307 did just that. Families traveling to the District of Columbia will no longer be able to benefit from whole-home rentals which make it easier and more affordable for them to travel and stay longer under one roof.

Again, I'd like to thank you for your commitment to establishing a uniform zoning policy for short-term rentals throughout the District and respectfully request that you authorize short-term rentals in residential zones as permitted under D.C. Law 22-307. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Joseph Montano
Government Affairs Manager, District of Columbia
Expedia Group