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To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: CASE 19-15: Graylin Presbury, President of the D.C. Federation of Civic Associations

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CASE 19-15: Testimony - Graylin Presbury, President of the D.C. Federation of Civic Associations

Hello, my name is Graylin Presbury and I'm the president of the D.C. Federation of Civic Associations.

Over the last few years, a significant threat to affordable housing and the safety of our communities has been creeping into our D.C. neighborhoods.

Commercial investors have been buying up apartment buildings and residential units by exploiting home-sharing websites like Airbnb to set up unregulated short-term rentals in neighborhoods throughout the city.

It may seem harmless, but these unregulated short-term rentals cheat law-abiding D.C. residents and are fracturing our neighborhoods by replacing our neighbors with complete strangers.

They are driving up our rent prices and lowering the availability of affordable housing for D.C. residents.

A glaring side effect of these unregulated short-term rentals is that they force D.C. residences out of their own neighborhoods because of increased rent. It forces them to seek less expensive housing outside of D.C. So, they leave, further eroding our communities and neighborhoods.

Often, the people who have been forced out of our community because they can't find affordable housing are single mothers, teachers and first responders. All of these people are the frame-work of any vibrant community. Without them, our lives and communities are incomplete.

This displacement must stop!

The D.C. City Council passed an ordinance last year that will put an end to these commercial interests buying up available D.C. residential units, while protecting real home sharing and affordable housing options.

The D.C. City Council did their duty to protect affordable housing and our neighborhoods. It's time for the Mayor and the Zoning Commission to do the same.

The Zoning Commission has dragged its feet for nearly a year in amending the zoning code to allow short-term rentals permitted under the new law.

I urge the Mayor and Zoning Commission to end the delays so the new short-term rental law can be implemented ASAP. Every day of delay, our housing supply is further depleted and neighborhoods disrupted from unregulated short-term rentals.

It's time to enact and enforce the law!

Thank you.

Graylin

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