



Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO

815 16th Street, NW, 3rd Floor • Washington, DC 20006 • (202) 974-8150 • Fax (202) 974-8152

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Executive Director

Carlos Jimenez

May 24th, 2017

Dear Chairman Mendelson and Members of the D.C. Council,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO to express our collective support for Bill 22-92, the *Short-term Rental Regulation and Affordable Housing Protection Act of 2017*. Given all of the challenges the city, its residents, and the 40,000 union members who call D.C. home face when it comes to housing and the lack of affordable options, it behooves us to make sure that we are doing everything in our power to have a transparent and accountable playing field in our rental market – and this is especially true on the issue of short-term rentals.

We recognize that you and other elected leaders are doing many things to address the housing challenges our city faces, for which we thank you and applaud your leadership. However, absent an intervention like Bill 22-92, we may be allowing some disturbing trends in our rental market to go from bad to worse. A recent report that explored AirBnB's listings in the District found that more than one-third of their listings were controlled by commercial operators. It concerns us that large and sophisticated market actors are directly competing with D.C. residents for the few and limited rental units in our market. At a time when there's a real hard conversation about prosperity, when we are undertaking efforts to ensure that it's shared and felt by all D.C. residents and attempting to keep the District moving in a positive direction, we have to be mindful of how the emergence of new technologies and platforms connects to the existing ecosystem and communities already here.

We believe that the final version of the short-term rental bill should require that residents only host short-term rentals in their primary residence. We also believe that the only way to minimize the temptation to convert housing into fulltime Airbnbs is to keep the vacation days low. Most people have two weeks of vacation per year. As result, we think 15 days is a reasonable cap. The 15 day cap and a primary residence requirement will go a long way toward maintaining the residential character of our neighborhoods.

Bill 22-92 is a sustainable, safe, and fair framework that would create common sense regulation to an emerging housing platform, while also being responsive and attuned to the needs of all other stakeholders and residents of the District. We urge you to support it, and thank you for all you do to continue moving our city and region forward.

Sincerely,

Carlos Jimenez,
Executive Director

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