

Testimony of Elizabeth Glazer
Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice
New York City Council
Committee on Housing and Buildings
Short-Term Rentals – Stimulating Economy or Destabilizing Neighborhoods

Good morning, Chair Williams and members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings. My name is Elizabeth Glazer, Director of the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, which oversees the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement. With me today is Chief Thomas Jensen from the Fire Department and Alex Crohn, General Counsel to the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. Elan Parra, the Acting Director of the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement, is unavailable to be here today. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee regarding short-term occupancies and the City's current enforcement efforts.

The Office of Special Enforcement maintains citywide jurisdiction to coordinate and enhance enforcement across City agencies concerning fire and building code violations in the five boroughs. The Office responds to complaints from New Yorkers on a range of issues including residential apartments that are illegally used for short-term occupancy. These complaints are received predominantly from 311. Where violations are found, the office's enforcement response can range from issuing a violation to pursuing civil litigation.

Founded in the mid-seventies as the Office of Midtown Enforcement, the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement was established by Mayoral Executive Order in 2006 and is charged with addressing issues that affect public safety, community livability, property values, and can lead to serious crime. The office is made up of twelve staff members: three New York City Police Officers, two Department of Buildings inspectors, one Fire Department inspector, an investigator from the Department of Finance, two attorneys, one full-time investigator, an office manager, and the Acting Director, Elan Parra.

Many, if not most, of the complaints OSE receives concern short-term transient rentals. A multi-agency team of inspectors responds to those complaints by conducting administrative inspections and issuing violations to landlords for non-compliance with required building and fire codes that govern transient use, including those requiring necessary egresses, sprinkler systems and fire safety and alarm systems. As the team conducts enforcement activity in the field, they collect data that is used to determine patterns or trends and to determine enforcement priorities.

When violations are issued, they are adjudicated before the Environmental Control Board. If an operator or owner of a short-term transient rental operation fails to comply with violation orders to end illegal transient use, then OSE will consider bringing affirmative litigation in the form of a nuisance abatement case against the offending parties. During this entire process, OSE works in partnership all the agencies on the taskforce, as well as the Department of Housing Preservation

& Development, the Department of Consumer Affairs, and other relevant City agencies when necessary.

OSE receives complaints from every borough, with a trend toward concentration in densely populated areas near tourist attractions. During calendar year 2014, OSE received a total of 1150 complaints via 311 specifically reporting an "illegal hotel" operation. During calendar year 2014, OSE successfully conducted 883 inspections and issued 495 Environmental Control Board violations and 391 Department of Buildings Notices of Violation.

In calendar year 2013, the office received 712 complaints of short-term transient use, meaning that the office has documented a 62% increase in short-term transient use complaints from 2013 to 2014. While OSE wrote approximately one third fewer overall violations in 2013, this decline reflects a change in record-keeping, no activity. In 2012, the City Council passed Local Law 45, which is a more effective transient use statute that enables OSE to issue one significant violation rather than numerous smaller violations. This new law, coupled with OSE's approach of targeting enforcement resources toward the properties that receive the most complaints, enables the office to focus on the most egregious offenders.

In addition to inspection activity, OSE also initiated a new lawsuit entitled City v. City Oases LLC, et. al. The case was filed in September of 2014 and involves allegations against two buildings in midtown Manhattan that were converted into an illegal hotel operation. The operator ran a proprietary website that continued to offer hotel rooms in both buildings, even after OSE conducted repeated inspections and issued numerous violations.

I am confident that the Office of Special Enforcement has played an effective role in addressing illegal transient rentals and the office will continue to work diligently to accomplish its mandate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am available to answer any questions the Committee may have.



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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

**Testimony of Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings
Oversight: Short Term Rentals – Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing
Neighborhoods?
January 20, 2015**

Good morning. My name is Gale A. Brewer and I am the Manhattan Borough President. Thank you to Chair Williams and to the members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings for the opportunity to testify.

The issues before you today are tremendously important. The topic we're hearing about today touches on so many different areas of law and policy, from the State Multiple Dwelling Law to our City's Building, Fire and Housing Codes, as well as zoning law and broad questions of land use policy. That's before we even start talking about the issues of technology, the internet, and federal communications law.

It is easy to get lost in all the questions that get raised in this conversation, and I think it helps to start with a central goal to keep in mind throughout: **that our City and State governments have a duty to protect our residential buildings and protect the safety, security and privacy of New Yorkers' homes** That is why, working with a broad coalition of fellow elected officials, tenant and housing advocates, and City agencies, I passed Local Law 45 of 2012, which allows City enforcement agencies to impose higher fines that serve as a real deterrent to illegal short-term rental operators. It is also why the same coalition worked with Senator Krueger and Assemblymember Gottfried to pass Chapter 225 of the Laws of 2010, which made technical changes and corrections to state law and City codes for the same ultimate

purpose: to give City agencies the tools they needed to enforce against illegal short-term rental operators.

New York City is unique in this country for the high-pressure nature of our housing market and the density of our housing; and we face unique pressures, challenges, and problems as a result. We create our very private and sacred homes within multiple dwellings of various sizes, but without much buffer between us. Our laws therefore have come to define the nature and character of our homes, and have recognized the importance of privacy and safety we hope for in our homes – even, and especially, when those homes all share common hallways and elevators.

A home is a home; public space is public space. And transient hotels and hostels are just that: public space. This qualitative difference is embodied in the law for a reason – to protect tourists and other transient visitors on the one hand, to protect residents and residential housing on the other.

It makes no sense to think that visitors to our City, no matter how we welcome them, will fit in seamlessly in our residential multiple dwellings. We conduct ourselves differently when we are within the building where we make our home. We put out welcome mats, leave our children's tiny wet snowboots in the hallway to dry, park a bike or a sled, and expect our newspaper to lie undisturbed until we pick it up. After all, we don't live in a transient hotel. We recognize our neighbors.

If we weaken or fail to enforce the existing laws and regulations against illegal hotel activity, we are in effect forcing thousands of citizens to live as if they are in a transient hotel. And, moreover, we are opening the doors to arbitrage – the hijacking and repurposing of

residential housing for non-residential purposes. In the context of residential vacancy rates that have hovered near or below 3 percent for decades, this outcome would be unacceptable.

By the same token, prompted both by forethought and sometimes by tragedy, we have developed a complex and effective system of fire, health and safety codes to protect consumers in our city – including tourists and visitors. Stronger fire codes, security requirements, and other safety features in hotels and transient housing are enforced because experience has taught us they are both wise and necessary.

I understand some view the business model represented by many of the companies under discussion today as forward-thinking and progressive, and even creatively transgressive of current hotel business models and the current regulatory framework. It is certainly the case that sometimes, truly innovative new business models run afoul of pre-existing rules in ways the writers of those rules did not expect. Sometimes, rules must change to accommodate innovation. But in the case we're discussing today, the rules as they are written are no accident. Before anyone had heard the word "internet," New York had laws preventing class-A residential housing from being rented to short-term visitors. Their purpose was to protect both our housing stock and residents.

The scenario we are discussing today is one that we see time and time again in government. A business comes along whose practices run wildly counter to laws and regulations that were written to protect consumers and residents and protect a resource of crucial importance to our city – in this case, preserving housing inventory for permanent residents. The business tries, through every means at its disposal, to carve holes in the regulatory system to accommodate its business model and enable the realization of enormous profits.

This is an important test. Will we allow the financial interests of these businesses to trump the needs of New Yorkers; to risk, by flouting regulations, the lives and safety of tenants as well as visitors, and most critically, to add to the pace at which regulated and affordable housing is disappearing? Without the defense of our existing laws, and robust enforcement of our City regulations, that is just what will happen.

The businesses that seek to weaken or permit exceptions to our laws are well funded and powerful. And the data released last year by the Attorney General shows that a disproportionately large share of the apartments being illegally used as transient hotels, and held off the rental market, are controlled by a small group of owners. You have heard compelling data from the testimony before me, and will hear much more from the witnesses following me, regarding the number of units at stake and how this practice adds to the loss of our fast-diminishing stock of affordable housing.

My staff and I, however, have also heard over the years from victims suffering most directly from the growth of so-called “apartment sharing” in the City. Many tenants face serious nuisance conditions from noise, garbage, and unwanted traffic. The elderly and families with very young children are particularly made to feel unsafe by the constant streams of strangers in the lobbies and hallways of their building. But the greatest problem is the threat to tenants by owners who hope to vacate as many units as possible, or even entire buildings, to then be used as transient, illegal hotels. Over the years I, my staff, and my fellow Manhattan elected officials have all encountered cases where landlords harassed tenants or refused to renew leases, all in an attempt to clear out units for more lucrative use as illegal hotel rooms. We have even seen cases where a landlord’s use of an apartment as an illegal hotel room functioned as a harassment tactic

aimed at neighboring tenants. For the sake of these New Yorkers, I urge this Committee to demand greater funding for enforcement of our laws and regulations in this area.

Having spent eight years chairing the Council's Science and Technology Committee, I am confident you will find no stronger voice for the application of new technology throughout the City than I. But, despite what some claim, this is fundamentally not an issue of accommodating and applying new technology. This is the continuation of a very old fight, and it's a fight to protect our housing. Preserving affordable housing, and keeping all our housing safe and healthy for all New Yorkers, must be our first and overriding goal.

Thank you.

FOR THE RECORD



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TESTIMONY OF NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER
SCOTT M. STRINGER

BEFORE MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS
OF THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

JANUARY 20, 2015

Thank you, Chairperson Williams, for holding this oversight hearing today on an issue of great importance to our city: short term rentals and their effect on our neighborhoods.

Despite strict laws barring rentals of apartments for fewer than 30 days, the short-term rental market has proliferated in recent years, as web-based platforms like Airbnb, FlipKey, and Homeaway have made it easier than ever for tenants and landlords to rent their units to tourists and others.

This growing trend poses concerns for the City of New York—in particular, for our affordable housing stock and public safety.

While the companies have argued that the majority of users rent out their primary residence for short durations during the year, *Airbnb in the City*, a report issued by Attorney General Eric Schneiderman in October highlights how many landlords are using these platforms to transform units that should be on the rental market to fly-by-night hotels.¹

The Attorney General's report found that from January 2010 to June 2014, six percent of Airbnb hosts dominated the platform, with some offering hundreds of unique units. These "Commercial Users" accounted for 36 percent of private short-term bookings and 37 percent of all host revenue.

The Attorney General also found that in 2013, more than 4,600 units were booked as short-term rentals through Airbnb for three months of the year or more, with nearly 2,000 booked for a cumulative total of six months or more. These units were effectively removed for practical use in the New York City housing market.

While there are 3.3 million housing units in the City of New York, the fact remains that we need every unit we can get to combat rapidly rising rents. As my office showed last year², between 2000-2012:

- Median apartment rents in New York City rose by 75 percent, compared to 44 percent in the rest of the country. Over the same period, real incomes of New Yorkers *declined* as the nation struggled to emerge from two recessions.

¹ <http://www.ag.ny.gov/pdfs/Airbnb%20report.pdf>.

² http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/Growing_Gap.pdf.

- Housing affordability, as defined by rent-to-income ratios, decreased for renters in *every* income group, with the harshest consequences for poor and working class New Yorkers earning less than \$40,000 a year. In 2000, renters earning \$20,000 or less were dedicating an average of 50 percent of their income to rental costs. Twelve years later, that average jumped to an untenable 67 percent, or more than two-thirds of household pay.
- New York lost an astonishing 400,000 apartments renting for \$1,000 or less. In some neighborhoods – among them Williamsburg, Greenpoint and Fort Greene in Brooklyn, as well as large sections of Harlem – average rents *doubled* over the 12-year period.

Unlike hotels, which must submit a fire safety and evacuation plan to the FDNY³, apartments being illegally used as short-term rentals are under no such requirement and generally do not offer visitors access to such plans.

In the end, the philosophy behind the multiple dwelling law is to protect tenants from the inconvenience of hotel-type occupancy in their buildings, ensure compliance with fire and safety codes, and preserve the supply of affordable permanent housing.⁴

These goals are the foundation of short-term rental policy in the City of New York.

Thank you.

³http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/pdf/fire_prevention/fsp_info/a_hotel_fire_safety_and_evacuation_plan_instructions.pdf.

⁴ See New York State Assembly Memorandum in Support of Legislation (S. 6873-B, 233rd Leg. (N.Y. 2010 (Sponsor's Memo) Bill No. A10008).



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Illegal Hotels: Bad for Affordable Housing, Residents, and Tourists

Testimony by Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried
Before the New York City Council Housing and Buildings Committee
January 20, 2015

I am Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried. I represent the 75th Assembly District, which includes Chelsea, Hell's Kitchen, Midtown, and part of the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

Illegal hotels have plagued New York City for over a decade, and the problem has reached a critical new stage. Online sites like Airbnb have facilitated a rise in transient use of residential apartments.

The 2010 Home Protection Law, which I sponsored in the Assembly, clarified the long-established principle in the Multiple Dwelling Law that "Class A" multiple dwellings are to be occupied as permanent housing, not for transient use. It did not make it unlawful for tenants to rent a room while they are in their apartment, or sublet for thirty days or more if their lease allowed. The owner of a small building may use it as a "B & B" by converting it to a Class B multiple dwelling if the zoning allows that. Buildings that are small enough not to be a "multiple dwelling" are also not affected by the law.

Airbnb's cheery TV commercials show smiling people having sun-lit brunch with their picture perfect house guests. But in reality, transient rentals can bring noise, disruption, strangers coming and going at all hours, fire and safety hazards, and often unsavory and illegal activities into residential apartment buildings. This deprives apartment residents of quiet enjoyment of their homes and deprives the City of urgently needed housing stock

Airbnb talks about "sharing." They really mean someone subletting an apartment, commonly at substantial profit, while inconveniencing and endangering the other people who make the building their home, without their consent. I would call that profiteering at the expense of your neighbors.

Many landlords are as upset as tenants about illegal hotel use. Someone else is making a profit renting out the landlord's property. When tenants complain, they complain to the landlord. If a city inspector writes up a violation, the landlord pays the fine.

But some unscrupulous landlords use illegal hotel rentals to make money beyond what the rent laws allow. Some use it to keep an apartment vacant (for various reasons)

while still taking in income. Some use it as a way to harass tenants to move out.

Illegal hotels also create problems for tourists. Residential buildings in New York City are not required to meet the strict fire and safety codes required for hotels. Often tourists book apartments online arrive from out of town to find the room they paid for in advance is not what they were promised. It may be dirty, bug infested, without linens and other services. They are stuck, with no one to complain to. There are no front desk clerks or concierges in the lobby of illegal hotels.

The City Council has the ability to help fight illegal hotels by increasing the resources of the Office of Special Enforcement, to enforce the law.

Illegal hotels also damages our economy and the jobs of people who work in legitimate hotels, including housekeepers, porters, bellmen, kitchen workers, food service workers, etc. These jobs support families, teach skills, and increase our tax base.

Airbnb's agenda seems to be what it has raised with us in the past: (a) to restrict the scope of the Home Protection Law, and (b) to cripple it by making it almost impossible to enforce.

The legislation Airbnb seems to be proposing would narrow the scope of the law, allowing apartment residents to rent out their apartments for transient use for their own profit, forcing the other building residents to "share" the building (their home) with tourists and other strangers.

This would gut the whole law by making enforcement a practical impossibility. It is hard enough for a building inspector to prove what is going on behind an apartment door if not invited in by the occupant. It would cripple enforcement if the inspector had to document that the violation is not only occurring today but has also occurred at other times during the year. I am sure Airbnb fully understands this.

I urge the Council to protect the right of New Yorkers to the quiet enjoyment of their homes; to protect New York's visitors from illegal hotels of unknowable quality and safety; and to protect our precious housing stock from being diverted to transient use. Protect and strengthen the City legislation that parallels the Home Protection Law.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today.

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Testimony of State Senator Liz Krueger
Before the New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings
“Short Term Rentals -- Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing Neighborhoods?”
January 20, 2015

My name is Liz Krueger and I represent the 28th Senate District, which includes the East Side and Midtown areas of Manhattan. I want to thank Chairman Jumaane Williams and the members of the City Council Housing and Buildings Committee for providing me with the opportunity to testify today.

I have been working for a decade to understand and address the exponential growth of residential apartments being illegally converted into short-term transient units for visitors, commonly referred to as “illegal hotels.” After years of collaboration with a large task force of elected officials, neighborhood organizations, housing advocates, and city agencies, Assemblymember Dick Gottfried and I passed legislation in 2010 clarifying ambiguities in city and state laws that made it difficult for city enforcement agencies to take action against illegal hotels. Following the enactment of the state law, I continued working closely with the task force to support the subsequent introduction and passage in 2012 of Local Law 45, sponsored by then-Councilmember Gale Brewer, to classify illegal hotel violations as “immediately hazardous” and increase the fines the city can impose.

Attached to my remarks today, you will find a fact sheet my office developed that answers frequently asked questions about the 2010 state law and the city’s enforcement system, as well as testimony I provided to the City Council in support of Local Law 45. The two documents provide background information regarding the evolution of the 2010 state law, explain why illegal hotel activity is such a fundamental threat to our city’s housing market, and clarify exactly what types of short term rentals are permitted by law. I am more than happy to answer any questions on any of these topics today or in the future. However, in my testimony today, I want to share some of the key lessons I have learned while wrestling with illegal hotel issues and offer a few recommendations for actions the City Council could take to curtail illegal hotel activity and increase the range of safe and affordable accommodation options for visitors.

The short-term rental of even a single residential unit in a multiple dwelling for part of the year can have extremely detrimental impacts on all the residents in the building. Even in cases where an apartment has a full-time resident who is only occasionally renting his or her

apartment for less than 30 days at a time, the fact remains that unvetted, unsupervised strangers wandering the halls of a residential building create major safety and security concerns, as well as nuisances, for the residents who actually live there. I constantly hear from constituents whose quality of life and sense of safety have been undermined by illegal hotel activity occurring in as few as only one or two apartments in their buildings. When tenants and apartment owners decide to rent their apartments to tourists, they do so at the expense of all of their neighbors who have to live with the consequences and never had a chance to sign off on the deal in the first place.

Some online companies that facilitate illegal hotel activity are attempting to create a false distinction between “bad” illegal hotel operators and “hosts” who participate in the “new sharing economy”. Since the enactment of the state and city illegal hotel legislation, much of the illegal activity has shifted from being organized by a relatively small number of local operators, frequently unscrupulous building owners or managers, to large online companies such as Airbnb, FlipKey, and OneFineStay that act as both marketplace and middleman for hundreds of thousands of short-term apartments around the world. These online businesses have become highly profitable by ignoring state and local laws and ignoring the damage their business model does to communities. Although illegal hotel activity now takes place in a wide variety of forms in New York City, the fundamental impacts it has on housing, safety, and communities are the same.

Airbnb, currently the largest of these online platforms with a valuation estimated to be as high as \$13 billion, likes to portray itself as a pioneer of the “sharing economy” movement fighting for everyday New Yorkers. The company now claims that it is more than happy to help get rid of the big illegal hotel operators on their site, and only wants the business of everyday New Yorkers renting out their primary residences every once in a while to tourists.

The facts do not match their words. A report recently released by State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman found that commercial illegal hotel operators controlling between 11 and 272 units accounted for such a wildly disproportionate share of Airbnb rentals between 2010 and 2014 that they essentially dominated the site. The reality is that they are lobbying for changes in the law that would create loopholes big illegal hotel operators could drive trucks through – but do nothing for the “everyday New Yorkers” who would be at increased risk of eviction if this law passes, let alone the many, many New Yorkers who will have to suffer with the risk of increased nuisances, security concerns, and even violent crime in their buildings.

To be crystal clear: for the so-called “regular” Airbnb hosts they claim they want to protect, the primary “threat” is not city and state enforcement. For these hosts, the primary threat facing them it is the reality that Airbnb has enticed them into behaviors that violate their lease agreements and serve as easy pretext for eviction proceedings. I will revisit this later in my testimony, but it’s a point that bears repeating. We have explained this to Airbnb repeatedly.

The costs illegal hotel activity imposes on our city’s housing market, residents, and neighborhoods dramatically outweigh any personal monetary gains the activity may generate for individuals who operate illegal hotel units. As many of you know, before my election to the Senate I managed nonprofit organizations fighting poverty, and my work focused especially on problems of hunger and homelessness. As an affordable housing advocate long before I took office, I know that when you take an affordable apartment off the market in New York City, it costs the

city to replace that unit, at minimum, \$500,000. Airbnb now claims that they would be more than happy to collect and remit \$65 million in hotel occupancy tax if we change the law to allow the illegal activities the site facilitates. That amounts to 130 units of affordable housing – a drop in the bucket.

The proliferation of illegal hotel activity has removed thousands of desperately needed affordable units from the housing market. Most disturbingly, many of these illegal conversions have occurred in buildings regulated under our rent stabilization laws and/or tax abatement programs intended to preserve affordable residential units. In many cases, our constituents are forced to face harassment and even eviction proceedings by unscrupulous building owners and managers who want to free up more residential units for this illegal – but lucrative – alternate use. Warehousing units as illegal hotel rooms to remove them from the rent regulation rolls for a year or more has even become a even backdoor deregulation tactic used by some landlords. So taxpayers are unknowingly and unintentionally subsidizing this business model even as it shrinks the universe of available residences.

The Attorney General's report on Airbnb found that the number of residential units used as short-term rentals grew at an explosive rate during its four-year review period, nearly doubling each year. As of January 2014, Airbnb had a total of 19,522 New York City listings on its site. 72% of these listings were for entire apartments in either multiple dwellings or non-residential buildings, violating building use and zoning laws. In 2013, more than 4,600 units were booked for three months or more. Almost 2,000 units were booked for more than six months of the year – rendering them totally unavailable for use by New Yorkers seeking homes. Although Airbnb is the largest of the online platforms, there are many others conducting similar transactions. As a result, the total number of residential units unavailable to everyday New Yorkers because of these online marketplaces is clearly much higher.

Virtually all residential leases, and cooperative and condominium governing documents, prohibit renters, cooperative shareholders, and condominium owners from renting their homes on a transient basis. Even if state and city laws were changed tomorrow to permit whole-apartment short-term rentals in multifamily buildings, anyone who engaged in this activity would continue to violate their leases or contractual ownership agreements and open themselves up to serious repercussions. This is a bedrock reality at the foundation of the real estate market in New York City and it will not change.

Numerous articles have appeared in the press in recent years about eviction cases initiated against both renters and cooperative shareholders who listed their homes on Airbnb and similar sites for violating the terms of their leases and/or corporate bylaws. My office has also received reports from tenant attorneys that more and more landlords have started eviction cases against rent regulated tenants who rented out rooms for less than 30 days, claiming that the tenants turned their apartments into commercial operations or were engaging in profiteering.

As a lifelong tenant advocate, I find it offensive that companies are actively recruiting tenants to list their apartments on their websites even though they are well aware they are putting residents at risk of eviction.

The creation of loopholes in the state and city laws that define the legal occupancy of multiple dwellings in New York City would make it impossible for enforcement agencies to take effective action against even the worst illegal hotel violators. One of the most important lessons I learned from my years working with the illegal hotel taskforce and government agencies is that the city's enforcement agencies can only issue and sustain violations for illegal hotel activity if city and state laws provide a single definition of what constitutes legal permanent occupancy in multiple dwellings. Even whether "permanent occupancy" is defined as 30, 60, or 90 days can have a significant impact on investigations.

During an extended series of meetings Assemblymember Dick Gottfried and I held with senior city agency staff to draft what became the 2010 state law, we heard again and again that creating any carve-outs in the legislation for specific types of activities that some might consider less objectionable – such as residents who truly rent out their apartments "once in a blue moon" – would make all illegal hotel enforcement impossible. And again, it is well worth remembering that the city's enforcement system, because it is complaint-driven and prioritizes sites with consistent, repeated complaints, poses virtually no problem to this "once in a blue moon renter," who instead is much more likely to face consequences in the form of an eviction action for violating his or her lease.

The regulatory frameworks recently implemented by Amsterdam, Portland, and San Francisco to legalize the use of certain types of residential housing for tourists are already proving unworkable, and must not be replicated in New York. The laws were passed in all three cities despite significant opposition from legislators, affordable housing advocates, tenants, owners of multifamily properties, and neighborhood associations. Opponents expressed serious concerns that the registration and licensing systems being created would be unenforceable, lead to the loss of housing for permanent residents, and harm tenants and responsible property owners. News reports from Amsterdam and Portland reveal that opponents' concerns were well justified (the San Francisco law does not go into effect until February 1, 2015).

Months after Portland's law was enacted, only 73 Airbnb "hosts" had applied for a permit and the city appears to be able to do little to enforce compliance. Airbnb has repeatedly refused requests from Portland enforcement agencies and City Councilmembers to share the names and addresses of Airbnb "hosts" who are blatantly violating the law and endangering public safety. If Airbnb is refusing to share critical data with Portland, a city the company loves to celebrate as its first model "Shared City", we can only imagine how it would respond to similar requests from New York.¹

In October, the Amsterdam City Council determined in October that the 22 full-time city inspectors dedicated to ensuring compliance with the new law were so overwhelmed by an explosion of complaints that the city needed to spend an additional 500,000 euros to hire more inspectors.²

¹Tim Becker, "1600 Airbnb Hosts, Only 73 Permit Applications," *KOIN 6*, November 7, 2014; The Oregonian Editorial Board, "Airbnb Should Share Portland Hosts' Info With City to Ensure Safety, Permit Enforcement," *The Oregonian*, December 29, 2014.

²"Amsterdam Admits It Can't Cope with Airbnb Inspections," *DutchNews.nl*, October 12, 2014.

The Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement (OSE), a small multi-agency taskforce of city agencies with exclusive jurisdiction over illegal hotel enforcement, needs additional resources to stem the tide of illegal hotel activity. Throughout all the years I have spent working on illegal hotel activity, I have been exceedingly impressed by the expertise and dedication of OSE staff. OSE staff were instrumental in the drafting of the city and state illegal hotel laws, have initiated groundbreaking litigation against some of the worst violators, and issued dozens of vacate orders after finding conditions that placed people's lives in immediate danger.

On a day-to-day basis, the OSE is responsible for responding to complaints of suspected illegal hotel activity from residents, visitors, community groups, and elected officials in every corner of the city. The OSE cannot issue violations simply based on online advertisements, complaints, or information collected by others indicating that illegal hotel activity is occurring. OSE investigators must visit every location – often multiple times – and be able to document substantial evidence of illegal hotel activity. OSE's legal team then has to be prepared to prove each violation was correctly issued at the City's Environmental Control Board. Each step of this process can be lengthy and requires the specialized knowledge the OSE has developed over the last decade.

The OSE's staff does a phenomenal job but simply do not have the resources they need to address the number of complaints they receive. Despite the exponential growth of illegal hotel activity over the last year, the OSE's budget has remained virtually unchanged.

I strongly encourage the City Council to examine how city government can help foster the development of more safe, legal, and affordable accommodation options for visitors in all five boroughs. There is a clearly a real market demand for tourist accommodations outside of core-Manhattan and at lower price points than those frequently available at large New York City hotels. In recent years, OSE staff extensively researched why more affordable accommodations were not being built to meet this demand. They concluded that one of the major hindrances is a provision in local law that makes it illegal to operate a for-profit hostel in New York City. OSE staff then spearheaded the drafting of City Council legislation (Intro. 1004/2013) that would make it possible for legal, commercial hostels to operate as long as they met all related zoning, safety, and regulatory requirements. I believe that if appropriately defined and regulated, for-profit hostels can meet a significant portion of the demand for affordable tourist accommodations, and urge this committee to schedule a hearing on this issue in the near future.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to working with the members of this committee to curb illegal hotel activity as well as on other critically important affordable housing issues.

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SENATOR, 28TH DISTRICT

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Statement from Senator Liz Krueger

Answers for New Yorkers Concerned or Confused About the Illegal Hotel Law

After years of work with neighborhood organizations, housing advocates and government agency staff, Assemblymember Dick Gottfried and I passed legislation in 2010 to give New York City enforcement agencies the tools they needed to take action against illegal hotels. Since then, much of the illegal hotel business has shifted from being organized by local operators and individual websites to large online companies like Airbnb. These online businesses have become highly profitable by ignoring state and local laws and ignoring the damage their business model has done to communities.

In recent months, Airbnb and an organization calling itself "Peers" have started a major PR and lobbying campaign to overturn New York's laws governing short-term rentals. With these businesses and groups circulating misinformation to residents, their own users, and the media, it's important that we all know what the law is, why it's important, and what our rights are.

What is illegal hotel activity? When permanent residential apartments in buildings with three units or more are rented out for less than 30 days to transient visitors instead of residents, that's illegal hotel activity. Illegal hotel operations can range from one unit, to a few units here and there, to large-scale operations, with dozens or even hundreds of units converted to full-time illegal hotel use.

The 2010 law does not apply to owners of single-family and two-family homes, or residents who rent out individual rooms in their homes for less than 30 days (as long as they are also there the entire time). Many members of "Peers," and the general public, appear to have been misinformed about this fact.

Why is this important? Illegal hotels exacerbate New York City's affordable housing crisis and are bad for tenants.

- **A Danger to Affordable Housing** – Every unit that's used all or most of the time for illegal hotel activity is an apartment that's not on the residential housing market. That means illegal hotels are worsening New York City's chronic housing shortage and increasing the rents of everyday New Yorkers. In some cases, landlords or managing agents who are running illegal hotel operations themselves attempt to harass or evict rent-regulated tenants to free up more units for this illegal misuse of housing.
- **Putting Neighbors At Risk** – Illegal hotel operations mean, at a minimum, a regular stream of relatively un-vetted strangers coming into and out of residential buildings. That can create serious quality-of-life problems and safety for neighbors, at a minimum – sleepless nights caused by overcrowded neighboring apartments packed with loud tourists, for example. But it can get far worse. My office has heard of buildings burglarized and neighbors assaulted by strangers who might never have had access to get inside, were it not for illegal hotel activity.

But wait, my lease says I can't do that anyway! Yes, the vast majority of rental leases, as well as most co-op and condo bylaws, do not allow tenants to rent out their apartments without first obtaining permission from their landlords or coop/condo board. This means that landlords (and many coop and condo buildings) can initiate eviction cases against those who are engaged in illegal hotel activity.

What about subletting and roommates? The changes made to the law in 2010 did not in any way impact tenants' rights to have roommates, sublet their apartments, or have non-paying guests stay with them. Additionally, residents who rent out rooms in their homes for less than 30 days (as long as they are also there the entire time) are not engaged in illegal hotel activity. Rent-regulated tenants should, however, be careful about renting out rooms for less than 30 days without first obtaining permission from their landlords. My office has heard that some landlords have started Housing Court cases against rent-regulated tenants who rented out rooms for less than 30 days, claiming that the tenants turned their apartments into commercial operations and/or charged the "guests" more than a proportionate share of the rent.

So why are Airbnb and other companies recruiting tenants to rent out their apartments on their website?

As a lifelong tenant advocate, I find it offensive that many companies are actively recruiting tenants to list their apartments on their websites even though they are well aware they are putting residents at risk of eviction. I have repeatedly asked Airbnb to put detailed warnings online but they have refused. Unfortunately, this is hardly the first time big businesses are trying to ignore or wish away an inconvenient legal reality, putting their clients and customers at risk rather than acting responsibly.

Airbnb says that 87 percent of their New York hosts are regular people who rent out their own apartments to pay their rent – that doesn't sound like what you're talking about. Yes, Airbnb throws that number around a lot, but even if it's true, that's the number of users – not the amount of business. The remaining 13 percent could represent 90 percent or more of the actual rentals happening. It's hard to know for sure, because Airbnb hasn't answered more detailed questions about their hosts and is currently fighting a subpoena from Attorney General Eric Schneiderman. While the companies making enormous profits off of illegal hotel operations in New York love to pretend they are helping tenants pay their rent, they are just as likely to get them evicted.

How do you respond to critics who say the law is in part designed to protect the interests of the big hotels in the city? The law was created to protect both the safety and quality of life of residents and visitors to New York City. In response to countless complaints from our constituents living in buildings with illegal hotels, I have been working for about a decade with other elected officials, affordable housing organizations, and City agencies to develop strategies to combat illegal hotel operations. While the Hotel Association of New York ultimately supported the 2010 law, the organization was not consulted until after the bill was introduced. In fact, because the Hotel Association was not involved in the effort that led to the bill, it had to be convinced that the bill would not harm its members!

What should I do if I think illegal hotel activity is happening in my building?

File a complaint with the City by calling 311, organize your neighbors, reach out to housing advocates, and contact your local elected officials.

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Testimony of State Senator Liz Krueger
Before the New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings
Regarding Intro 404 to Increase the Fines Levels for Illegal Hotel Violations
December 13, 2011

My name is Liz Krueger and I represent the 26th Senate District, which includes the East Side and Midtown areas of Manhattan. I want to thank Chairperson Erik Martin Dilan and the members of the City Council Housing and Buildings Committee for providing me with the opportunity to testify today in support of Intro 404, which I believe is a critically important piece of legislation.

The proliferation of illegal hotel operations has removed thousands of affordable apartments from an already tight housing market, disrupted the lives countless permanent residents who live in the buildings where the illegal hotels are operating, decreased the revenue the City receives from hotel taxes, and ruined many tourists' visits in New York. The internet has made it easier than ever to advertise illegal hotels, which are residential units that are designated under the New York State Multiple Dwelling Law and City zoning rules as permanent residences but are improperly used as transient hotel rooms. Even a brief search of the internet reveals hundreds of advertisements for illegal hotels. Housing advocates estimate that there are many thousands of these units being operated in more than 300 buildings across New York City, primarily in Manhattan and North Brooklyn but increasingly in other areas as well. Building owners and third party managers convert residential units, the majority of which are located in buildings with rent-regulated and Single Room Occupancy tenants, into illegal hotel units in order to make more money on the apartments than the law allows.

Permanent residents living in buildings with illegal hotels regularly report significant increases in noise, harassment and crime, and decreases in building-wide services. Residents are frequently extremely concerned that the safety of their buildings is undermined by strangers coming and going from their buildings at all hours. Because illegal hotels do not comply with applicable fire and safety laws that are required for buildings used for transient occupants, they pose a serious threat to the safety of building residents, tourists, and any first responders who are called in to deal with emergencies. Tourists who sign up to stay in illegal hotels through various websites are generally not aware that the units do not conform to fire and building safety standards, and are often distressed to find that their accommodations are cramped, illegal, and do not provide

hotel services. When tourists have bad experiences in illegal hotels, New York City's international reputation as a tourist and business destination is harmed. In fact, just this week my office received a complaint from a visitor from Virginia who paid more than \$2,500 to stay in what turned out to be an unsanitary and unsafe illegal hotel unit that she found via the internet this past summer.

I have been working to understand and address the problems caused by the exponential growth of the illegal hotel industry ever since I started receiving large number of complaints from constituents in my district office more than six years ago. After discovering that many of my colleagues in the City Council and State Legislature were receiving similar complaints from their constituents, I, along with City Councilmember Gale Brewer and Assemblymember Dick Gottfried, formed an Illegal Hotel Taskforce which grew to include dozens of City and State elected officials, neighborhood organizations, and housing advocates. Over the next few years, the Taskforce held countless meetings with City and State agencies and hosted multiple town hall meetings across the City with hundreds of residents directly affected by illegal hotels operating in their buildings. These meetings enabled us to fully grasp the scope of the problem, determine why enforcement was so difficult, and figure out what legislative and/or regulatory changes were necessary.

Throughout this process the City's Office of Special Enforcement (OSE), along with the City Departments of Buildings and Housing Preservation and Development, provided invaluable input on what prevented City agencies from cracking down on illegal hotels and the types of legislative changes that would be necessary to empower the agencies to conduct effective enforcement. Two sets of problems were ultimately identified as those which needed to be remedied through legislation:

- there were conflicting definitions of the term "permanent residence" in various City and State laws, and there was a lack of clarity surrounding the number of units that had to be rented out on a transient basis in a building for a violation to exist
- the maximum fine that can be assessed for illegal hotel violations is \$800 regardless of the time and number of units being rented illegally, an amount so low that it is easily written off as a cost of doing business and so is not a deterrent to illegal activity.

In order to eliminate the first set of hindrances to the ability of the City's enforcement agencies to address illegal hotel operations, Assemblymember Gottfried and I introduced legislation (S.6873-B/A.10008-B of 2010) to clarify the ambiguities in the State Multiple Dwelling Law and the City Administrative Code. The bill, which was drafted with significant assistance from the City's enforcement agencies and was strongly supported by Mayor Bloomberg, created a single definition of "permanent residency," made it clear that all Class A multiple dwelling units must be rented by a person or household for 30 consecutive days or longer, and established that renting even a single Class A unit in a residential building for less than 30 days is illegal. After receiving strong support from City Councilmember Christine Quinn and other members of the City Council, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, the *New York Times* editorial page, the Commissioner of the New York Fire Department, multiple tenant organizations, the Hotel Association of New York City, and the New York Hotel and Motel Trades Council, the bill was passed by the Senate and Assembly and signed into law by Governor David Paterson at the end of the 2010 legislative session. In the first month after the law went into effect on May 1, 2011,

the OSE took action against 15 residential locations that were illegally converted into unsafe hotels. The OSE found conditions at eight of these locations which were so imminently dangerous conditions that the agency issued full or partial vacate orders on the buildings.

The new State law removed many of the legal obstacles that prevented action against illegal hotels, and I believe that the City's OSE and other agencies are fully committed to cracking down on illegal operators. However, as long as the potential fines remain negligible, the City's enforcement agencies and Environmental Control Board (ECB) will not have the tools they need to permanently shut down existing illegal hotel operators or prevent others from opening. The passage of Intro 404 into law would finally ensure that the City has the ability to issue penalties to illegal hotel operators that are truly meaningful, and which will serve as real deterrents to those considering entering the illegal hotel business.

Intro 404 would significantly increase the fines the City can levy for the illegal conversion of permanent residential units in multiple dwellings into illegal hotel units by categorizing the conversion of more than one unit in a building, or a subsequent violation in a unit in the same building, as "immediately hazardous violations" under the City's Building Code. Adding illegal hotel violations to the list of 15 violations considered "immediately hazardous"-- a list which currently includes such violations as unlawful demolition and disobeying a stop work order-- would clearly signal the level of danger posed by illegal hotels. Classifying illegal hotel violations as "immediately hazardous" would also dramatically increase the fines that the ECB could impose from the current maximum of \$800 per violation to between \$1,000 and \$25,000 per violation (with the exact amount to be determined in each case by the ECB administrative law judge), plus an additional \$1,000 daily penalty for each day a violation is not corrected.

Given the fact that many illegal hotel operators charge hundreds of dollars a night for units that could only be legally rented for a tiny fraction of that amount, it is absolutely critical for the ECB to have the power to impose substantial monetary penalties. While an illegal hotel operator who is earning \$200 a night for an apartment that can be legally rented for \$1,200 per month can easily write off an \$800 fine as the cost of doing business, the threat of a \$25,000 fine that escalates at \$1,000 per day dramatically changes the economic reality for illegal hotel operators. The threat of such significant fines would finally provide real leverage to the City's enforcement agencies and also serve as a deterrent to those currently considering entering the illegal hotel industry.

New York City's enforcement agencies need the tools provided by Intro 404 in order to effectively crack down on illegal hotel operations that are endangering public safety, taking desperately needed affordable apartments away from residents, and reducing tax revenue. I strongly urge the City Council to enact Intro 404 as quickly as possible.



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FOR THE RECORD

Testimony of Assemblymember Deborah J. Glick
 Before the NYC Committee on Housing and Buildings Hearing on Illegal Hotels
 January 20, 2015

In October of 2008, my office was informed by residents of 1 Bank Street (in Greenwich Village) that something unusual was taking place in their residential building: it was slowly turning into a hotel. Five vacant apartments had been converted into corporate suite accommodations and tourists had begun to show up with their luggage in tow. Long term tenants who had formed a community, now found themselves confronting strangers walking their hallways.

Furthermore, for the first time in the building's history market-rate tenants inexplicably were not waving their leases renewed. Apparently, Manhattan's surging real estate market had proved to be too enticing. The management company decided they could earn more money by disposing of year-round building residents and replacing them with tourists who rent apartments on an extremely short term basis. At the time this seemed abnormal, and I did not have an inkling that this problem would only get progressively worse as companies like Airbnb grew in size and stature.

Unwelcomed transients pose a number of safety issues for permanent tenants in buildings where people rent out their apartments through Airbnb. This practice disturbs existing tenants' security and the notion of unknown people having keys to front doors and being unfamiliar with building fire and noise regulations is alarming. Additionally, if a transient in a building causes damages to common areas, Airbnb is not responsible for paying for any necessary repairs.

There are those who argue that the sharing economy guarantees individuals the right to rent out their apartment in any manner they choose, but that is not the case. There are laws in place that prohibit illegal hotels for good reason. Most of these illegal rentals often violate city leases, co-op rules or zoning regulations. So this notion of the sharing economy actually diminishes the responsibility on the part of Airbnb because in all actuality there is no sharing of responsibility if problems occur. Sadly, because of the proliferation of advertising around the City, many New Yorkers who host through Airbnb do not realize they are putting their homes in jeopardy because they are violating their lease terms which could lead to eviction. Of course Airbnb accepts no responsibility in these cases, which is highly questionable, considering they are the driving force behind such behavior.

The ability to conduct this illegal activity without fear of reprisal has only exacerbated an affordable housing crisis the likes of which this City has never seen. As landlords become savvy to the fact that they can reap windfall profits from illegally renting their units on a short term

basis, the pressure on individuals living in affordable apartments has gotten worse. And while I understand that illegal hotels can help certain individuals receive windfall profits, I can't see how codifying this behavior makes sense for the vast majority of New Yorkers. The tax dollars that illegal hotel operators and facilitators promise are of little importance when counted against the number of affordable units that are being lost. Illegal hotel operators and facilitators severely underestimate the damage they have caused. Although the hedge funders who have private capital invested in the company may think it's a panacea for all, everyday New Yorkers know that this is an illegal practice that should remain illegal.

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January 20, 2015

Good morning, and thank you for this opportunity to testify before the New York City Council's Committee on Housing and Buildings, and to Chairman Jumaane Williams and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for calling this hearing. As the State Senator for the 31st district and ranking member on the State Senate's Housing Committee, I am glad the City Council is continuing to look into how short-term rentals are putting our communities at risk. I would like to thank my colleagues in government and activism from local organizations including Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (NMIC), RENA, Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project, and Housing Conservation Coordinators (HCC).

Our city has a housing affordability crisis, and companies such as AirBNB contribute to the problem. Just yesterday I was speaking with constituents who were victimized by a scam artist selling non-existent rights to move into rent-regulated apartments. This criminal played to the desperation of New Yorkers to find affordable housing in our city, a desperation that has grown with housing costs rising much faster than wages. Governor Cuomo's recent proposal to create a higher minimum wage for New York City in a step in the right direction.

Approximately 250,000 apartments have been taken out of the rent stabilization system since 1993 due to vacancy decontrol. With rent regulation laws up for renewal in Albany this year, we will be fighting to eliminate vacancy decontrol, reform MCIs, eliminate the vacancy bonus, and additional measures that would limit the methods landlords can use to price New Yorkers out of their apartments.

While Mayor de Blasio has made it a priority to address the housing affordability crisis by expanding New York City's housing stock with an additional 200,000 affordable apartments over the next decade, turning residential rooms and apartments into short-term rentals reduce the availability of housing. This results in even higher rental prices, putting New York City at risk of becoming permanently unaffordable.

Many hosts are unaware of the liability they are assuming when they turn their residence into a short-term rental. Last September, Assemblyman Moya and I wrote a letter to Benjamin Lawskey, Superintendent of the New York State Department of Financial Services, over concerns regarding AirBNB's "\$1 Million Host Guarantee." While hosts may believe they have financial protection against damages, this questionable form of insurance, which is not sanctioned by the Department of Financial Services, only applies to the property owner. In a city where roughly two thirds of

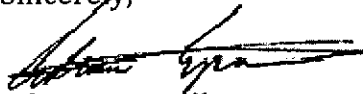
residents are renters, AirBNB's "\$1 Million Host Guarantee" may provide hosts peace of mind without mitigating any risk.

Renters who turn their apartments into short-term rentals are often unknowingly putting themselves at risk for eviction. According to New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, from January 2010 to June 2014, 72% of units rented in New York City were in apparent violation of city or state regulations. This includes tenants of rent-regulated apartments, who are legally not allowed to sublet their apartment for more than a pro-rated share of their rent. For a tenant living alone in a rent-regulated two-bedroom apartment paying \$1,800 a month, if they rent out an extra bedroom on a short-term basis for more than \$30 per night, the tenant may face eviction.

Short term rentals put New Yorkers at risk. Risk of eviction, risk of paying for property damage, and risk of becoming priced out of New York City. AirBNB has identified many of these problems and should take steps to ensure the practices of the company and its hosts are in accordance with the laws of New York.

I look forward to working with the City Council and my colleagues in Albany to ensure short-term rentals do not destabilize communities.

Sincerely,



Adriano Espaillat
Senator, 31st District
Ranking Member, Housing Committee
Chair, Latino Caucus



LINDA B. ROSENTHAL
Assemblymember 67th District

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TESTIMONY OF ASSEMBLYMEMBER LINDA B. ROSENTHAL BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON HOUSING & BUILDINGS ON SHORT TERM RENTALS – STIMULATING THE ECONOMY OR DESTABILIZING NEIGHBORHOODS?

January 20, 2015

Good morning. I am Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal and I represent the 67th Assembly district, which includes the Upper West Side and parts of the Clinton and Hell's Kitchen neighborhoods in Manhattan. My district, like so many others in New York City, has struggled with an illegal hotels problem. In 2007, I checked into one of the most infamous illegal hotels in a single room occupancy building (SRO) in my district for two nights to demonstrate that the building was illegally renting out rooms to tourists for single night stays. What I witnessed during my brief stay not only confirmed my constituents' complaints, but reaffirmed my commitment to eradicating illegal hotels. With the advent of Aribnb, my commitment is even stronger.

For those not familiar with the issue, or those who have been inundated with propoganda from Airbnb, the illegal hotel practice is not a benign part of the "sharing economy" now being popularized by those who stand to profit the most from it. Illegal hotels have been and will continue to be a scourge on the communities in which they operate.

Illegal hotels are disruptive and potentially dangerous. Unlike long-term tenants, transient hotel guests are not typically invested in the comity and well-being of the community in which they are staying. It is common for tenants to complain of an increase in noise, garbage and vandalism in their buildings as the number of transients increase. In addition, with a deluge of strangers traipsing through buildings at all hours, tenants often report an increase in crimes such as burglary, muggings and even assault. When transient occupancy occurs, when the key to the front door of a multiple dwelling is given out to any stranger renting a room, it is difficult to distinguish those who belong in the building from those who do not, which puts the entire community at risk. I remember when one of the key tenants of buildings was to never share the front door key.

In addition to a general deterioration in building conditions and overcrowding of residential neighborhoods, the danger to the tourists in rental buildings cannot be ignored. Fire and building codes are specific to each class of building and designed to protect the particular resident. Because residential buildings are not constructed with the safety of a transient guest in mind, tourists staying in them run a greater risk in the event of a fire or other emergency situation. That also, obviously, endangers residents who are supposed to occupy those apartments.

By far, however, the most insidious characteristic of illegal hotel activity is the fact that it contributes to the loss of affordable housing in New York. With a vacancy rate hovering just below 2%, New York City has been struggling through an affordable housing crisis of epic proportions. While wages and incomes have stagnated over the course of the last decade, rents have skyrocketed, and working families in New York often have to juggle bills in order to pay their rent and other regular expenses.

Illegal hotels activity often occurs in neighborhoods suffering with rising rents, and the activity contributes to a damaging increase in rental prices overall, which drives long-term residents out and working-class families further into the margins. In addition, illegal hotel activity often thrives in buildings with single room occupancy and other rent-regulated units. For landlords of buildings filled with rent-regulated or other affordable tenants paying reasonable rents, operating an illegal hotel is an attractive, albeit illegal option to increase profits at the expense of the tenants and affordable housing. To that end, the prospect of operating an illegal hotel provides landlords with an incentive to empty their buildings of affordable tenants, usually accomplished through a combination of targeted harassment and neglect. Once the affordable tenant vacates, the illegal hotel activity begins and the regulated unit is lost forever.

Though it is hard to calculate the total number of affordable housing units lost to illegal hotel activity, in my district alone we have shut down dozens of illegal hotels operating in hundreds of units of affordable housing. At a time when New York City has made the preservation or creation of 200,000 units of affordable housing one of its top priorities, we cannot allow insidious illegal hotel operators to continue to bleed hundreds or thousands of units of affordable housing.

From any vantage point, Airbnb is promoting illegal hotel activity, regardless of how many times it displays images of smiling families and the “every man” New Yorker in its advertisements plastered all over television and the subway. In my district alone, there are more than 2,000 Airbnb units, and according to the New York State Attorney General’s investigation, the vast majority of those units are illegal, meaning that they are operating in rent-regulated housing or when the tenant of record is not on premises. This activity is destabilizing communities, disruptive to tenants, dangerous for tourists and destroying what’s remaining of New York’s rapidly diminishing affordable housing stock.

Though I might be of a different generation, it is not hard to understand what Airbnb is trying to do here. Really, it’s simple: the company is trying to create a sharing economy, one in which their hosts run the risks of eviction and contribute to the loss of affordable housing while the company shares in the profits of its illegal enterprise.

The prohibition against transient occupancy in rental buildings grew out of the need to protect long-term tenants against incursions by strangers. In 2010, recognizing that illegal hotel activity was increasing in number and in scope, the New York State Legislature acted to clarify and strengthen the law to guarantee robust enforcement. On the heels of that action, Airbnb would now like us to legalize a behavior that we have worked for years to prohibit.

It’s clear to all of us what Airbnb is doing. What it calls a “sharing economy,” is really just a euphemism for “we are going to share your city’s affordable housing with the world to profit to the tune of billions of dollars.” Like a marauding army, Airbnb is flooding it has flooded the market here in New York City and countless other cities across the country, with illegal units. After its incursion is complete, it comes to the government, claiming ignorance and begs to be

carved out of the laws that protect tenants and affordable housing citywide. Airbnb is breaking the law and encouraging tenants to break the law. Its excuse, it claims it is not its responsibility to pay attention to the myriad municipal regulations.

Airbnb should not be given carte blanche to break the laws of the State of New York and threaten to further destabilize communities that are already suffering through an acute loss of affordable housing. If Airbnb would like to operate here in New York, then just like any business, it must be required to comply with the laws of the city and the state.

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**Testimony of State Senator Brad Hoylman
to the New York City Council
Regarding Illegal Hotels**

January 20, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the New York City Council regarding the explosive growth of illegal hotels, also known as “short-term rentals,” and their effect on our communities. I represent neighborhoods with the highest number of illegal hotels in New York City, including Hell’s Kitchen, Chelsea, the Village and the Lower East Side – areas which, according to data released by Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, accounted for one third of units booked and 55% of illegal hotel revenue from 2010-2014.

New York thrives on the newest invention and hottest trends, and welcomes visitors with open arms, with record-breaking numbers of tourists every year from 2009-2013. However, within the close confines of our city, both the technology industry and tourists must follow the laws designed to protect the safety and well being of all of our residents, guests and visitors.

Class “A” residential buildings make up the vast majority of New York City’s residential housing stock. When these units are converted from residential use to commercial use as illegal hotels for tourists and visitors, it reduces the available housing options for everyday New Yorkers, driving up the rental price of apartments. The data released by the Attorney General showed that last year revenue from illegal hotels was expected to top \$282 million, creating powerful financial incentives for landlords to transition their residential units to commercial use. This squeeze is felt most acutely in buildings with rent regulated tenants, where unscrupulous landlords use any means necessary to force rent stabilized and rent controlled tenants from their long-time homes. This problem continues to grow exponentially, taking more and more of our residential housing stock off the market. In fact, the same data released by the Attorney

General demonstrated a more than tenfold increase in illegal hotel bookings from 2010 to 2014.

Illegal hotels create a number of quality of life and safety concerns for neighboring residents. Individuals renting illegal hotels do not have the same vested interest in ensuring the harmonious, quiet enjoyment of an apartment as permanent residents. The Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement has been forced to take action against a number of operators that have turned buildings into hostel-like environments, severely diminishing the quality of life for remaining tenants. Illegal hotel operators also distribute keys to the front doors of buildings, allowing anyone to enter. This creates a significant safety risk to residents who are unable to recognize potentially dangerous individuals from illegal hotel guests, and making it easier for criminals to gain unlawful access to apartments. Should the short-term rental laws be undermined, and illegal hotels are allowed unimpeded, no tenant in a rental building would be able to be sure that they were living in a residence instead of a hotel.

Illegal hotels violate a number of City and State laws, including fire safety, building and zoning codes. In New York City the Fire Code requires that legal transient occupancies, such as hotels, comply with a higher level of fire protections than residential apartment buildings, a result of lessons learned in tragic hotel fires throughout the country. In 2012, the New York City Fire Department's Chief of Fire Protection Thomas Jensen testified that, "a visitor who occupies a unit in an apartment building that is being used illegally for transient occupancy, does not have the benefit of the fire and life safety measures required in legal transient occupancies [hotels] for the protection of persons unfamiliar with the layout of the building.... The visitor is thus placed at significantly increased risk of injury or death in the event of a fire." I believe strongly that a cheap place to stay or a few quick bucks from renting an apartment while the primary tenant is away is not worth the additional risk to life and safety.

Illegal hotels disregard New York City Department of Buildings Certificates of Occupancy, which decide whether buildings are safe for users and comply with the building code. Additionally, illegal hotels violate local zoning laws that separate commercial and residential use, undermining the ability of residents to determine the type of community in which they would like to live.

New Yorkers have a right to the quiet enjoyment of their homes and visitors have a right to a safe, legal place to stay. Any effort to undermine the short-term rental law would diminish the rule of law and quality of life in our city.

I appreciate the New York City Council for taking up this important issue. Thank you for your consideration of my remarks.



DANIEL O'DONNELL
Member of Assembly
69th Assembly District

THE ASSEMBLY
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ALBANY

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TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS
CONCERNING ILLEGAL HOTELS

DANIEL O'DONNELL
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY MEMBER, 69TH A.D.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2015

Good morning. My name is Daniel O'Donnell and I am a member of the New York State Assembly, 69th District, representing residents of Manhattan Valley, Morningside Heights, and portions of the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding illegal hotels.

The district I represent encompasses a wide range of residential options, with a mix of condos, coops, public housing, a few private homes, and a number of privately owned rentals, both rent-regulated, and increasingly, unregulated. It is one of the most diverse, economically and racially, in the state. Illegal use of residential buildings has long been an issue in our community, and the relatively recent addition of online websites where people can more easily find short-term rentals has only added to the problem. Ending illegal hotels is good public policy, essential for public safety, and key to preserving neighborhoods.

I was first acquainted with the issue of illegal hotels shortly after being elected to office in 2002. Ann Cunningham, the mother of the campaign against illegal hotels, reached out to my office for support in preventing her landlord from renting units in her building for short-term, hotel use. We were eventually successful in that struggle, but the problem was much larger than just her building.

In 2010, I was a cosponsor of the bill introduced by Senator Liz Krueger and Assembly Member Richard Gottfried (A10008/S06873-B) to strengthen New York City's Multiple Dwelling Law and Administrative Code as it related to class A multiple dwellings. The bill, which was signed into law in 2010, clarified that residential buildings, in their entirety, are intended for residential, permanent use, defined as more than 30 days of occupancy. This clarification made it easier to take legal action against illegal hotels.

Despite the substantial penalties for owners who use dwellings constructed for permanent occupancy as illegal hotels, this practice still remains vast. The proliferation of short-term apartment rental websites and listings on those websites demonstrates this fact. Airbnb for example, had under

3,000 units listed in 2010. In just the first five months of 2014, there were over 16,000 units listed. The economic incentive for this unlawful and dangerous practice has increased, especially as New York City is attracting visitors and tourists from around the world in record numbers. In most cases tourists responding to such advertisements are unaware that the rooms are being offered in violation of the law.

Short-term rentals of residential, permanent housing are unsafe and hurt everyday New Yorkers by depleting the housing stock. The failure to prevent them is poor public policy. The Multiple Dwelling Law and local Building, Fire and Housing Maintenance Codes establish stricter fire safety standards for dwellings such as hotels that rent rooms on a day-to-day basis than the standards for dwellings intended for month-to-month residence. Apartments that are rented illegally are not necessarily up to code with these stricter rules, putting both tourists and long-term residents in the building at risk. Short-term use of units in residential buildings also exposes long-term residents to more strangers entering their buildings, which can lead to increased burglaries, assaults, and other public safety issues, not to mention noise at all hours of the day and extra wear and tear on a building's public areas.

Illegal hotels, and the sites that make them easier to find, threaten our neighborhoods and our ever scarcer stock of affordable housing. In Manhattan alone, Airbnb's listings accounted for 1.74% of the available housing stock. This is greater than Manhattan's vacancy rate of 1.54%. Units are being taken out of the permanent housing stock to be used as short-term, mainly illegal rentals. This hurts New Yorkers by driving up rental prices for the little remaining housing stock.

There is a more than adequate supply of legitimate hotels with accommodations in all price ranges. Airbnb, and other sites like it, appear to be a useful tool for tourists, but Attorney General Eric Schneiderman's commendable investigation into Airbnb found that 72% of all Airbnb rentals in NYC were illegal, with commercial users controlling a disproportionate share of rentals. Businesses are using these sites to make money without complying with existing laws or paying required taxes. Should the growth of tourism result in increased demand for hotel rooms in the future, commercially zoned areas of the city allow widespread opportunities for new legitimate hotels. Let's stop using our already scarce housing for purposes other than sheltering our city's residents.

I will not support legislation to weaken the laws that clearly make it illegal to use apartments as hotels. I ask the New York City Council to use all of its enforcement powers to uphold existing laws to this end. I encourage more investigations into outfits illegally renting out large numbers of permanent housing units through these websites as hotels. I am committed to good public policy, neighborhood integrity, and public safety. Illegal hotels are a threat to each of these areas. Let us keep working together, at all levels of government, to make New York City a place where all of us can live safely.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments.



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FOR THE RECORD

NYC COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

Oversight: Short Term Rentals – Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing Neighborhoods?

January 20, 2015

On behalf of the Hotel Association of New York City (“HANYC”) thank you Chair Williams and the Members of the Committee for the opportunity to submit comments today. The issues that are expected to be addressed at the hearing regarding short term rentals are subjects that the hotel industry takes very seriously. The Hotel Association represents 275 of our City’s finest hotels which account for over 76,500 rooms, employing over 50,000 workers.

The burgeoning short term rental industry holds itself out to the public as a safe, unique and cost effective alternative to traditional hotels. Yet, New York City’s hotels, in contrast to short term rentals, are heavily regulated by the City, provide a range of choice for the consumer, and are cost effective due to a robust expansion of inventory—especially in areas like Long Island City and downtown Brooklyn. As compared to hotels, short term rentals are not subject to stringent fire safety standards and do not provide the security expected by hotel guests, nor do they provide good paying jobs, and do not pay the myriad array of taxes required of a New York City hotel.

New York City hotels (commercial properties) are subject to stringent fire safety requirements that are not provided in residential settings. The basic reason that hotels are subject to stricter regulations is due to the fact that hotel guests are temporary and much less familiar with their surroundings than an individual or family who lives in an apartment. For example, hotels must have FDNY approved fire safety plans, a communications system, clear signage and lighting, trained personnel, and in most buildings, a sprinkler system. The Council, by Local Law, approves all changes to the Fire Code. As late as 2013 HANYC worked with the Council and the FDNY to update and improve the Fire Code regulations that hotels are subject too. There are clear reasons why hotels are subject to different fire, along with building and zoning, regulations than residential buildings. The City wants to ensure that guests will stay in the safest environment possible and that the FDNY, DOB, and other City agencies can enforce these laws.

Short term rentals do not provide for the security of guests (and in the case of short term rentals, the safety of full time residents), that are featured in all New York City hotels. As simple as the phone in each room to call the front desk for assistance, to the close working relationship our member properties have with the NYPD—traditional hotels make the safety of each of its guest a top priority. Each hotel has employees in place that are trained to look out for each guest and respond immediately to safety

issues. The members of the Association work with the NYPD and other agencies to address world terror threats and also local issues that staff needs to be aware of in order to protect guests.

Hotels in New York City provide for thousands of good jobs. These jobs are middle class jobs that support many families throughout New York City. Many HANYC members employ members of the Hotel Trades Council which came to a historic agreement last year to extend the hotel workers contract to 2024. The union employees of HANYC members have wages that clearly put them in the middle class, full health benefits, a pension, continuing training, and strong workplace protections.

Employees of hotels are fully trained in their respective areas and how to respond immediately to the concerns and problems of guests. Hotel employees know when to respond to an emergency, are aware of what is going on in each hotel 24/7, and can respond to concerns right away to make sure a guest's experience is a good one. Although a short term host may know the City and the neighborhood, there are no employees to respond to safety issues, lodging concerns, or take care of issues with the unit such as cleanliness, water and heat.

Although the short term rental industry will claim that they are willing to pay the sales and occupancy taxes that hotels are required to collect, this does not capture all the taxes that the owner of a hotel is subject to and will not "level the playing field." Due to the nature of a hotel, since it is a commercial business, the building is taxed accordingly by the City in regards to property taxes. For example a 60,000 square foot building with a \$100-million market value—the assessed value for a hotel is 40% and for a residential building it is 6%—the disparity is huge. In addition, each time a hotel building is bought and sold the City captures certain transaction taxes like the Mortgage Recording Tax. The hotel industry, especially in this time of increasing tourism, plays an important role in contributing tax revenue to the city budget. The industry remitted to the City over \$530 million in hotel taxes in Fiscal Year 2014.

The hotel industry worked in concert with the Hotel Trades Council and the City Administration to secure passage of the State Law (Chapter 225 of 2010) and the subsequent City Law (Local Law 45 of 2012), that gave the City the ability to enforce the illegal conversion of a residential unit for hotel purposes. The City Council and the Administration recognized that the regulations and taxes that they have mandated for hotels over the decades is a system that works for tourists, hotel employees and the residents of New York City. Allowing residential units to be used for short stays compromises the safety and security of guests and permanent residents, puts into jeopardy thousands of good middle class jobs, and the City loses out on critical tax revenue.

The Hotel Association of New York City appreciates the long working relationship of the industry and those in government. We look forward to continuing to work with you on the issues to be discussed at the hearing and to make sure that New York City continues to be the greatest place in the world for tourists, business and the over 8 million that live here.

Vijay Dandapani, Chairman of the Board of Directors

Joseph E. Spinnato, President

**Testimony to the Committee on Housing and Buildings
of the New York City Council
By Ryan J. S. Baxter, Senior Policy Analyst
Real Estate Board of New York
Submitted January 23, 2015**

The Real Estate Board of New York, representing over 16,000 owners, developers, managers, and brokers of real property in New York City, thanks you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding short-term rentals.

Although short-term rentals appear to assist New Yorkers by supplementing incomes, REBNY feels they threaten the affordability, safety, and residential character of affected buildings, while disadvantaging law abiding hotel operators in New York City. According to Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, 72% of units used as private short-term rentals on Airbnb between January 1, 2010 and June 2, 2014 appeared to violate either the Multiple Dwelling Law (“MDL”) or other State and local laws restricting short-term rentals passed by the State in 2010. In addition, the report also states that numerous short-term rental units appeared to serve as illegal hostels in 2013. REBNY believes that the City and State should make every effort to uphold and enforce these laws that are protective of New Yorkers.

The changes to the MDL restrict residential multiple dwelling use to permanent resident purposes, defined as being occupied by the same person or family for 30 or more consecutive days. Any occupancy that does not meet this definition is required to comply with different and often stricter standards, including: building, fire and life safety, design, operational, and business reporting protocols. These laws and requirements are in place to protect the general safety of those dwelling in these units, as well as to protect their neighbors. Circumventing these laws for individual gain may exacerbate emergency situations, create confusion, and potentially harm all tenants within that building.

Additionally, permitting people transient hotel-like access in residential buildings where others have legally purchased or rented can create substantial safety problems within the building. Without a vested interest in the building, the short-term tenants are more likely to run afoul of house rules, and the enforcement of those rules becomes extremely difficult. Additionally, there is a tremendous amount of uncertainty regarding responsibility if the short-term tenant damages the building, violates a regulation, or willingly commits a crime. Often buildings are communities where there is the security of knowing your neighbors and fellow tenants in the building. Ignoring the MDL introduces destructive forces to those communities that may impair the welfare of New Yorkers.

Finally, with the limited amount of affordable housing in the City, and the high demand for those units, we believe it is a poor use of a very limited resource to allow tenants of those units to defy State and local laws and rent the units at a market rate.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to continuing our conversations with the Council to continue improving housing and safety throughout the City for all New Yorkers.



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January 20, 2015

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Testimony of the Community Housing Improvement Program

Oversight: Short Term Rentals - Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing Neighborhoods?

Good morning, my name is Joseph Condon. I am providing this testimony on behalf of the Community Housing Improvement Program ("CHIP"). CHIP is a housing advocacy group with approximately 4,000 members who collectively own and/or manage approximately 400,000 units of rental housing throughout New York City. The large majority of those units are rent-regulated in some shape or form. Before I begin I'd like to thank the Committee for taking an interest in this important issue.

CHIP members have significant concerns with tenants who use apartments in violation of the Multiple Dwelling Law's requirements for residential housing. These concerns are for valid reason, first and foremost being the safety issues that arise when a stranger who is unknown to the tenant, unknown to the building owner, unknown to the building staff, unknown to the other residents of the building, and unfamiliar with building itself, is staying in the building. And the safety concerns are not limited to the transient occupant from a fire-safety perspective – the security and safety of the other residents of the building are put in jeopardy as well. And the owner is unknowingly exposed to significant liability.

There are also significant public policy concerns with respect to this type of activity occurring in rent-regulated housing. The New York State Court of Appeals recently declared that rent-stabilization is a local public assistance benefit. When rent-regulated tenants engage in short-term rentals, they are effectively commercializing this public assistance benefit to turn a profit by charging short-term tenants in excess of the legal rent for the apartment. Such a result could not have been intended by the rent stabilization law or other rent laws. Even where a current tenant continues to occupy the apartment as a primary residence while providing room and board to a short-term occupant (an exception to the prohibition on transient occupancy in residential apartments), it could not be intended that a rent-stabilized tenant be permitted to commercialize their residential apartment and charge occupants more than the legal rent.

Finally, the enforcement against short-term lessors must change, particularly when the short term lessor is the tenant. Building owners, and particularly their staff, are on the front-lines of this issue. However, they are put in a difficult position because of the lax and mis-targeted enforcement efforts against short-term lessors. Owners may discover this type of activity in

their building, but have limited resources to prevent the tenant from continuing to pursue short term-rentals. If an owner contacted a local enforcement agency, the law permits the owner to be held responsible for the tenant's wrongdoing. Further, any type of legal action taken directly by the owner against the tenant would be expensive and difficult, for procedural as well as substantive reasons. So although owners are in the best position to know or become aware of this type of activity, they are without any real remedy to prevent it from happening.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide the testimony. CHIP and its members would welcome further discussions with the Committee, the Mayor's Office, and the State on this issue.



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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEES ON
HOUSING AND BUILDING - OVERSIGHT: SHORT TERM RENTALS –
STIMULATING THE ECONOMY OR DESTABILIZING NEIGHBORHOODS?**

January 20, 2015

Thank you Chairperson Williams, and members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings, for the opportunity to provide testimony today.

This testimony is submitted on behalf of The Legal Aid Society. The Society is the oldest and largest program in the nation providing direct legal services to low-income families and individuals. The mission of the Society's Civil Practice is to improve the lives of low-income New Yorkers by providing legal representation to vulnerable families and individuals to assist them in obtaining and maintaining the basic necessities of life — housing, health care, food and subsistence-level income or self-sufficiency. The Society's legal assistance focuses on enhancing individual, family and community stability by resolving a full range of legal problems in the areas of housing and public benefits,

foreclosure prevention, immigration, domestic violence and family law, employment, elder law, tax law, community economic development, health law and consumer law.

Introduction

New York City's vacancy rate for rental apartments is 3.12% according the United State Census' New York City 2011 Housing and Vacancy Survey. Short term rentals take apartments off of the residential market decreasing New York's vacancy rate, creating incentives for landlords to harass tenants out and become hotel owners and increasing rents for New Yorkers who make New York City their home. As such we supported the illegal hotel law passed in 2010. We believe the law needs enforcement and would support increasing the funding for enforcement efforts. In short, it is our observation as an agency that represents tenants in all five boroughs, that short term rentals have a significant destabilizing effect on our neighborhoods.

Declining Availability of Housing

Unfortunately for New York renters, declining affordability is coupled with declining availability. The net vacancy rate of rent-stabilized units was 2.63 percent in 2011 compared to a City-wide vacancy rate of 3.12 percent, significantly below the 5.0 percent threshold that legally defines a housing emergency.¹ The number of vacant units affordable to low-income New Yorkers is even more meager. In 2011, the vacancy rate for all units with rents less than \$800 was only 1.1 percent, and for apartments with rents less than \$1000, only 1.75 percent were vacant.² The vacancy rate for rent-stabilized units was even more troubling, measuring just 2.63 percent in 2011, 90 percent of which had asking

¹ NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 3.

² Dr. Moon Wha Lee, City of New York Department of Housing Preservation and Development, *New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (HVS)*, 344.

rents of over \$900.³ Of rental units with the lowest 20 percent of asking rents, the vacancy rate was a mere 1.15 percent in 2011.⁴

The decrease in availability of affordable vacant units is exacerbated by the loss of at least 104,155 rent-stabilized housing units in the last 20 years, primarily due to high-rent vacancy deregulation.⁵ Units that remain available are increasingly out of the range of low-income New Yorkers. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of units in New York City renting for less than \$1000 declined by over 400,000.⁶ Overall, from 2002 to 2011, there has been a 39 percent loss in rental apartments that low-income households can afford.⁷ Raising rents would only accelerate the loss of increasingly scarce housing affordable to low-income New Yorkers.

The scarcity of available rent-stabilized housing is a part of an overall decline in the availability of affordable housing. Expiration of 421-a benefits removed 757 formerly-stabilized units in 2013.⁸ The development of additional, publicly-funded housing by HPD and HDC continues to decline, with 9.7 percent fewer new starts in 2013 than 2012.⁹ In the first three quarters of the current fiscal year, there were 21.7 percent fewer new starts than in the corresponding period of fiscal year 2013.¹⁰ Furthermore, the steady decrease in

³ Dr. Moon Wha Lee, City of New York Department of Housing Preservation and Development, *New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (HVS)*, 346.

⁴ Dr. Moon Wha Lee, City of New York Department of Housing Preservation and Development, *New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (HVS)*, 344.

⁵ NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *Changes to the Rent Stabilized Housing Stock in New York City in 2013*, 9, 13. (As noted in the report, these numbers are a floor or a minimum count of units loss as registration of deregulated units with DHCR is voluntary).

⁶ Scott M. Stringer, New York City Comptroller, *The Growing Gap: New York City's Housing Affordability Challenge*, 2014, 6.

⁷ Coalition for the Homeless. *State of the Homeless 2014: Turning Point: Amidst Unprecedented Homelessness – A New Focus on Housing Can Turn the Tide*, 14

⁸ NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 8.

⁹ NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 7.

¹⁰ *Id.*

Mitchell-Lama units has accelerated over the past several years, with at least 43,000 lost to buyouts since 1985.¹¹ There remain only 47,000 such rental units left in the City today.¹²

Applicants for public housing face similar shortages: 247,262 families are on the waitlist for conventional public housing, with 121,000 applicants are on the waiting list for Section 8 housing vouchers in New York City, though no new additions have been made to the wait list since 2007.¹³ The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) accepted only emergency applicants into the program from May 15, 2007 to December 10, 2009, and stopped processing voucher applications altogether in December 2009.¹⁴

This combination of market forces and governmental decisions has worked together to have a devastating effect on low and moderate income New Yorkers. The declining number of vacant units available for rent, the fact that housing expansion has not kept pace with population growth,¹⁵ and the ongoing public housing crisis have all contributed to the scarcity of available affordable housing.

Effects of Short Term Rentals on New York City's Neighborhoods.

Airbnb flourishes in areas where affordable housing is scarce and rents are increasing by double digits. These types of short term rentals lead to housing units being removed from the rental market and the deregulation of rent stabilized and rent controlled units. Tenants who rent their apartments in violation of their lease and the rent laws risk eviction. We have seen an explosion of eviction cases where the underlying charges are the

¹¹ NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 8.

¹² Dr. Moon Wha Lee, City of New York Department of Housing Preservation and Development, *New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (HVS)*, 98.

¹³ New York City Housing Authority, "Section 8 Assistance," available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycha/html/section8/section8.shtml>. Data accessed June 2014.

¹⁴ New York City Housing Authority, "Section 8 Assistance," available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycha/html/section8/section8.shtml>. Data accessed June 2010.

¹⁵ Margery Austin Turner, *Current Rental Housing Market Challenges and the Need for a New Federal Policy Response: Statement before the Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Transportation, HUD, and Related Agencies, US House of Representatives*, 2.

illegal rental through Airbnb and other similar web based services. Additionally, short term rental incentivize landlords removing residential units from the market. It has been our observation that the quickest and most economically efficient way to remove tenants is through harassment.

Additionally, residential apartment building were not meant to be hotels. Turning apartments into hotel rooms creates safety and security risks for both New Yorkers and tourists alike. Fire and safety code violations and hazards are rampant. Residential buildings are not required to comply with the stringent fire code regulations that commercial hotels are. Permanent tenants living in building that owners and other tenants have turned into hotels must deal with strangers gain access to buildings resulting in burglary, assault, and other public safety issues.

While Airbnb would have you believe that this is an issue of small business owners being overregulated by out dated government regulations, in fact, commercial users are a disproportionate share of these rentals. The New York State Attorney General, in his report issued in October found that 6% of hosts supply 36% of units and earn 37% of the revenue. Additionally, 72% of Airbnb rentals in New York City are illegal.

Lastly, we are extremely concerned that these types of hotel accommodations are trying to avoid City, State and Federal accessibility requirements for people with disabilities. Airbnb list units as "wheelchair accessible" where the units have spiral staircases and other issues which render the apartments non-accessible. In this case, as with the illegal hotel law, both these companies and their hosts seem to believe that they do not have to follow the law.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee on this important issue. We strongly believe that short term rentals destroy neighborhoods, lead to tenant harassment and eviction and result in rents rising and apartments becoming increasingly unaffordable to our clients who live in New York City. We look forward to working on these issues with you and your committees.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Davidson, Esq.
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TESTIMONY
ON
**SHORT-TERM RENTALS – STIMULATING THE
ECONOMY OR DESTABILIZING NEIGHBORHOODS?**

PRESENTED BEFORE:

THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL'S
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

PRESENTED BY:

DAN EVANS

TENANT ORGANIZER

GODDARD RIVERSIDE SRO LAW PROJECT

January 20, 2015



Good afternoon, Chairman Williams and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Dan Evans, and I am a Tenant Organizer at the Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project. Our office provides legal assistance, tenant advocacy and organizing support to tenants on Manhattan's West side.

While I currently work as an Organizer with the SRO Law Project, I am also a licensed attorney in the state of California. I recently relocated to New York from San Francisco, where I worked as a Staff Attorney at the Eviction Defense Collaborative, providing low-cost legal services to tenants facing eviction. Prior to working with the Eviction Defense Collaborative, I provided free legal services to indigent, disabled tenants and helped fight for tenant rights for four years. I have extensive experience advocating and litigating on behalf of tenants in the area of landlord-tenant law.

Illegal hotels, and on-line operators that facilitate services, such as AirBnB and other online platforms, are an epidemic in San Francisco. Websites like AirBnb allow tenants to rent out their apartments, not only in violation of local law, but also in violation of their lease.

San Francisco recently passed legislation, which has been signed into law and will go into effect next month. The new law essentially legalizes the former unlawful activity of renting to transient visitors for a period of less than 30 days in residential buildings, which are intended to be inhabited by permanent tenants. Under the new legislation, San Francisco's zoning laws had to be amended, and now allow for commercial use in properties that are not equipped to handle such commercial use. Additionally, the law is so complex, convoluted and complicated that it would be nearly impossible for a layperson to understand. Some basic requirements in order to comply with the new law include that: a tenant must register with the city, may only rent for 90 days per year and must pay hotel taxes to the city. Joseph Tobener, a tenants rights attorney in San Francisco runs the Tobener Law Offices, and currently represents the San Francisco Tenants Union. According to Mr. Tobener there is absolutely no mechanism for enforcement of the new law.

Under the new law, the City of San Francisco and non-profits can bring litigation to enforce the law, but only if the Department of Building Inspectors issues a violation. Similar to New York, the Department of Building Inspectors' inspectors are backlogged, and therefore, according to Mr. Tobener, the Department of Building Inspectors has been refusing to issue violations, as when they arrive at the property, the bad actors have stopped such unlawful activity. This illustrates that even legalizing such unlawful activity is of no use, as there is no way to properly enforce the new law set to go into effect in San Francisco two weeks. Even if San Francisco had an enforcement office similar to New York's Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement that was adequately staffed and properly resourced, it would be impossible to enforce such a law. Inspectors would be required to determine who has rented their apartment in violation of the law by sending an inspector to that particular apartment daily for those 90 days. It simply is unrealistic and unenforceable.

Further, even if a tenant is able to jump through the numerous hoops to comply with the new law, and properly register with the city, rent for less than 90 days per year and pay all taxes, the tenant would still be in breach of his lease for having unauthorized subtenants. While the revision of the local zoning codes to allow commercial activity in residential buildings may solve the small problem of “using a residential unit for a commercial purpose,” it does not address that a tenant would be allowing subtenants to occupy the premises without prior authorization from the landlord. While this may be a “curable” offense, if the tenant continues to participate in such activity, which, presumably he will, believing he has protection under the new law, the landlord will be able to commence litigation to evict the tenant for nuisance. Nuisance, under the San Francisco Rent Ordinance, allows a landlord to have valid cause to evict a tenant for repeated acts that interfere with the landlord, or other tenants’, quiet enjoyment of the premises. Therefore, even if a tenant were to cure the issue of having an unauthorized subtenant, the landlord would be able to proceed under a nuisance theory for eviction, as the tenant will have engaged in repeated behavior in violation of the lease.

In addition to addressing the current legislation in San Francisco, I’d also like to speak to my personal experience in representing tenants facing eviction in San Francisco. During my last few months of practice in San Francisco, our office saw a surge of Unlawful Detainer (eviction) lawsuits come across our desks, as tenants were unknowingly breaching their leases, by either illegally subletting, or using their residential apartments for a commercial purpose, which is also known as illegal use, by renting them out on sites like AirBnB, to transient visitors.

I counseled, advised and represented countless tenants facing eviction proceedings brought by their landlords, because the tenants were unknowingly in violation of their leases. What began as “curable” offenses, essentially giving the tenant thirty days to remove the “unauthorized subtenant,” quickly turned into three-day notices to quit the premises (move out), for using their residential space for an illegal, commercial purpose. The most memorable case I worked on ended with a young woman, attempting to raise additional funds in preparation for the arrival of her son, by utilizing AirBnB’s services, being forced to vacate her apartment on the date she was due to give birth. Unfortunately, this tenant’s story is not rare, as landlords are quick to evict tenants breaching their leases, so that the rent can be raised to market-rate.

It is clear that San Francisco’s amendment of the zoning laws to allow this formerly unlawful behavior does not address the overarching concern that illegal hotels, and AirBnb specifically, contribute to the loss of affordable housing by making tenants susceptible to eviction. As Senator Diane Feinstein stated, “The legislation approved by the board will encourage property owners and renters to vacate their units and rent them out to hotel users, further increasing the cost of living. Simply put, this bill will further increase already sky-high rental costs.”



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TESTIMONY

ON

**SHORT-TERM RENTALS – STIMULATING THE
ECONOMY OR DESTABILIZING
NEIGHBORHOODS?**

PRESENTED BEFORE:

THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL'S
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

PRESENTED BY:

MARTI WEITHMAN
DIRECTOR
GODDARD RIVERSIDE SRO LAW PROJECT

January 20, 2015



Good afternoon, Chairman Williams and members of the Committee. Thank you, Chairman, for holding this hearing and providing the opportunity to testify today on the issue of short-term rentals in residential buildings. My name is Marti Weithman and I am the Director of the Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project.

I. Introduction

The Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project works with some of New York City's most vulnerable residents through a combination of free legal services, organizing and advocacy services, and community education to tenants living on the West Side of Manhattan. The Law Project was formed as part of Goddard Riverside Community Center in 1981 to preserve Single Room Occupancy ("SRO") housing and to protect the rights of tenants living in this housing. Generally, SROs are a single room with access to a shared bathroom and/or kitchen in the common areas of the building. Over the years, our practice has expanded to include services to apartment tenants. SROs have been a staple of the affordable housing stock for low-income residents throughout New York City for over half a century. Residents of SROs include some of the most vulnerable and marginalized residents in the city, including the elderly, disabled and people who otherwise would be homeless.

Short-term transient rentals for stays of less than thirty days in residential buildings have reached epidemic proportions in our City. Over the past few years with the advent of large-scale online platforms such as Airbnb, illegal hotels have spread throughout the City. Airbnb and others facilitate the easy dissemination of advertisements for illegal short-term rentals. For over a decade, short-term rentals have disrupted the lives of regular New Yorkers, created safety and security issues for New York residents and tourists, removed valuable affordable housing from our already depleted housing stock and driven up rents in our communities further exacerbating our affordable housing crisis.

II. History of Illegal Hotels

Illegal hotels first started to appear over a decade ago in residential SRO and apartment buildings on the upper West Side. Because of their layout, SROs are conducive to being used as transient hotels or hostels for tourists. Landlords put bunk beds in rooms and fill them with European backpackers looking for hostel-like accommodations. Landlords rent these rooms on a nightly basis collecting what would be the lawful monthly rent for the room in just a couple of days. With the incentive of such enormous profits, landlords force out permanent, rent stabilized tenants through systematic harassment.

When our office first started receiving complaints from tenants about illegal hotels they revolved around quality of life issues, harassment, and security and safety concerns. Tenants complained of increased pressure to move, including harassment in the form of frivolous lawsuits and refusing to make repairs. Tenants complained about the negative impact on their quality of life because their homes had been turned into hotels with a constant flow of tourists at all hours of the day and night disrupting their quiet enjoyment and creating an unsafe environment that threatened their safety. Tenants also complained fire hazards created in their buildings with

overcrowding and tourists who were unfamiliar with their surroundings in the event of a fire putting everyone's lives at risk.

In 2005, our office, along with Housing Conservation Coordinators and West Side Neighborhood Alliance, formed the Illegal Hotels Coalition, to address the increased complaints our office was receiving from tenants living in residential buildings that were being turned into illegal hotels and hostels. While this issue started locally in our communities on the West Side of Manhattan, it has since spread across the city and today our coalition includes over forty tenants and housing rights organizations citywide.

III. The Laws Related to Short-Term Rentals in Residential Buildings

There are good reasons for New York's laws that regulate housing. Our zoning laws keep New Yorkers and tourists safe by requiring more stringent safety regulations for commercial hotels than for residential buildings. We have rent regulation to provide New Yorkers with protections and ensure that they can live in affordable housing. And we have laws against short-term rentals to prevent residential buildings from becoming illegal hotels and thus reduce the number of apartments available to New York residents.

Chapter 225 of the Laws of New York of 2010 ("Illegal Hotel Law")

In July 2010, the New York State Legislature enacted Chapter 225 of the Laws of New York State, which became effective on May 1, 2011. Chapter 225 amended the Multiple Dwelling Law ("MDL"), the Administrative Code and the Zoning Resolution so as to clarify existing provisions of the MDL and other provisions relating to occupancy of class A multiple dwellings in response to an errant court decision. The amendment clarified the definition of "permanent resident purpose" as occupancy by a person for at least thirty consecutive days.¹

It is important to note the Legislature's stated justification for amending the law, which was explained by the sponsor:

The Multiple Dwelling Law and local Building, Fire and Housing Maintenance Codes establish stricter fire safety standards for dwellings such as hotels that rent rooms on a day to day (transient) basis than the standards for dwellings constructed for permanent occupancy (Class A) as illegal hotels. However, the economic incentive for this unlawful and dangerous practice has increased, while it is easier than ever to advertise illegal hotel rooms for rent to tourists over the Internet. This is especially so in New York City, which is attracting visitors and tourists from around the world in record numbers. In most cases tourists responding to such advertisements are unaware that the rooms are being offered in violation of the law. Not only does this practice offer unfair competition to legitimate hotels that have made substantial investments to comply with the law but it is unfair to the legitimate

¹ The court's decision in City of New York v. 330 Continental, et al, departed from the City's long-held interpretation of the MDL's definition of "permanent residence."

“permanent” occupants of such dwellings who must endure occupants of such dwellings who must endure the inconvenience of hotel occupancy in their buildings and it decreases the supply of affordable permanent housing. It endangers both the legal and illegal occupants of the building because it does not comply with fire and safety codes for transient use. Recently, law enforcement actions against illegal hotels have been hindered by challenges to the interpretation of “permanent residence” that enforcing agencies have relied on for decades.

Equally important as what this law prohibits is what it permits. For example, the law does not apply to owners of single and two family homes or residents who rent out a room in their apartment for less than thirty days as long as they are present. It should be noted, however, that despite being lawful under the MDL, the leaseholder may be violating his lease and thus putting himself at risk of eviction. Finally, “incidental and occasional occupancy” for less than thirty days while the leaseholder is not present is also permitted, provided that there is no monetary compensation paid for the occupancy.

The passage of the Illegal Hotel Law was the first step towards cracking down on the illegal conversion of residential units into commercial tourist hotels.

Intro 404 – Increased Fines for Illegal Hotels

Fines for illegal hotel activity did not provide the disincentive to bad actors necessary for them to cease their illegal activity. In 2011, after the State Legislature amended the MDL with the passing of the 2010 Illegal Hotels Law, the New York City Council took the significant step of passing Intro 404, which increased the fines for violations involving short-term rentals. Intro 404 gave teeth to enforcement of the existing laws by providing a fine structure of \$1,000 - \$25,000 for an illegal conversion in addition to a per diem fine of \$1,000. This legislation provided a disincentive for landlords who were illegally converting their residential buildings into transient hotels and hostels.

New York City Building Code

The Building Code governs the alteration and use of multiple dwellings in New York City. The Building Code prohibits changes in the occupancy or use of an existing building that is inconsistent with the building’s certificate of occupancy. As such, class A multiple dwellings, which are required to be occupied for permanent residence purposes – thirty consecutive days or longer – as set forth in the law cannot be occupied as short-term rentals without lawfully changing the certificate of occupancy for the building to comply with such use.

New York City Fire Code

The Fire Code requires transient residences to comply with higher fire safety standards than residential buildings because occupants of transient or commercial residences are unfamiliar with their surroundings and fire evacuation procedures. These safety hazards are also created with severe overcrowding, which occurs in many residential buildings where multiple apartments or rooms are being rented on a short-term basis. Stricter standards were adopted after an electrical fire swept through the Stouffer Hotel in White Plains in 1980 that killed 26 people and injured

40. This was one of a series of hotel fires across the country that led to changes in fire safety standards countrywide. Some of the safety standards for transient residences include fire extinguishers, sprinklers, alarms, evacuation plans, diagrams, 'fire safety directors,' fire brigades, command centers, and training.

Rent Regulated Leases/Co-Op and Condo By-Laws and Proprietary Leases

Even though the MDL permits short-term rentals of less than thirty days in residential buildings provided that the leaseholder is present, tenants, co-op shareholders and condo owners may still be at risk of eviction or legal action with such rentals. Rent regulated tenants who rent a room in their apartment for less than thirty days may be at risk of violating their lease for illegal subletting, commercial use and profiteering. Similarly, short-term rentals in co-op and condos are also in violation of by-laws and proprietary leases. Those who list such rentals on platforms such as Airbnb, are not properly informed of the laws that they may be violating and thus put themselves at risk of eviction.

Nuisance Abatement Law

Illegal hotel use in a residential building creates a public nuisance, which includes “[t]he use or alteration of property in flagrant violation of the building code zoning resolution ... multiple dwelling law ... which [interferes] with the interest of the public in the quality of life and total community environment, the tone of commerce in the city, property values and public health, safety and welfare; ...”. Turning residential buildings into hotels disrupts the quiet enjoyment of and creates unsafe environments putting permanent residents at risk.

IV. Enforcement of Short-Term Rentals in Residential Buildings

State and City elected officials have responded over the past decade to address the detrimental impact that short-term rentals have had on the lives of New Yorkers.

Mayor’s Office of Special Enforcement

In 2007 the City restructured the Mayor’s Office of Special Enforcement (“OSE”) to respond to the rise of illegal hotel use in residential buildings. The OSE has a joint task force including inspectors from the Department of Buildings, Police Department, Fire Department, Department of Health, and Department of Finance. OSE responds to complaints about short-term rentals in residential buildings (classified as “4A” complaints), conducts inspections and issues violations and vacate orders. As of early 2014, the time between complaint and inspection was approximately four to six weeks. Violations issued by OSE are heard by the Environmental Control Board.

City of New York v. 330 Continental, et al, 2009 NY Slip Op 00460 (App. Div. 1st Dept 2009)
The City commenced litigation against the owner of three residential SRO buildings on the upper West Side seeking a preliminary injunction to stop their illegal hotel activity. The City was successful in obtaining the injunction, however it was reversed on appeal. The appellate court also changed the long-held interpretation of the law by the City, which resulted in the State Legislature passing the Illegal Hotels Law in 2010 to correct the errant decision. A settlement was reached with the owners agreeing not to rent for periods of less than thirty days pursuant to the law and paying \$600,000 in fines.

New York City v. Smart Apartments LLC, 39 Misc 3d 221 (Sup. Ct., N.Y. Co, Engoran, J. 2013)
The City commenced litigation against a commercial hotel operator, Smart Apartments a/k/a/ Toshi Apartments, shutting down its illegal hotel operation. This case also set legal precedent that “advertising, maintenance and operation of permanent residential properties for short-term transient use where such use is prohibited and unsafe, deceives consumers and creates a public nuisance endangering or injuring the property, health, safety and comfort of residents in those buildings, residents in surrounding areas, and tourists and visitors to New York City.” In settlement, Smart Apartments agreed to pay \$1M penalty to the City to create a restitution fund for Smart Apartment tourists affected by the company’s misleading practices.

City of New York v. City Oases, LLC, et al, NY Supreme, Index No. 451997/2014
Most recently, in August 2014, the City commenced legal action against two residential buildings for illegal hotel operations and obtained a preliminary injunction enjoining the owners from renting apartments for less than thirty days, which is contrary to the buildings certificate of occupancy. The causes of action included deceptive trade practices because the owners’ advertisements induced tourists to New York City to book accommodations in a residential building for less than thirty days, which are unlawful and unsafe; violation of the MDL for renting apartments for periods of less than thirty days; illegal occupancy in violation of the Building Code for transient occupancies; public nuisance for maintaining unsafe building conditions that endanger the public safety; Fire Code violation based on unsafe building conditions; and common law nuisance for creating serious safety risks for the transient occupants and a degradation in the quality and comfort of the residents.

New York State Attorney General Report

NYS Attorney General Eric Schneiderman released a report in October 2014 detailing Airbnb’s business in New York City based on anonymized data from January 1, 2010 to June 2, 2014 obtained pursuant to subpoenas.² While the Attorney General’s report addresses a part of Airbnb’s business – and a piece of the larger issue of illegal hotels that plague New York City – their findings were staggering.

- 72% of all Airbnb rentals in NYC are illegal
- Commercial users accounted for a disproportionate share of the rentals with 6% of the hosts earning 37% of the revenue
- More than 100 commercial users each controlled ten or more unique Airbnb units accounting for over 47,000 reservations, earning nearly \$60M
- In 2013, more than 4,600 units were booked as short-term rentals through Airbnb for three or more months of the year. Of these units, nearly 2,000 units were booked for six months or more of the year, rendering them largely unavailable for long-term residential use
- Most of the rentals in 2013 were concentrated in Brooklyn and Manhattan with Lower East Side/Chinatown, Chelsea/Hell’s Kitchen, and Greenwich Village/SoHo. Williamsburg and Greenpoint had the highest share of private short-term rentals in Brooklyn

² <http://www.ag.ny.gov/pdfs/Airbnb%20report.pdf>.

V. Short-Term Rentals in Residential Buildings Exacerbate New York's Housing Crisis

Perhaps the most damaging impact that short-term rentals have had – and continue to have – on New York City is on the loss of affordable housing. The use of residential buildings for short-term rentals is removing desperately needed housing from our already depleted housing stock making housing less affordable by restricting the supply and driving up rents.

To illustrate the loss of SRO housing due to short-term rentals over the past decade, highlighted below are a few examples:

- 307 West 79th Street – The Imperial Court Hotel is a residential SRO hotel with 227 SRO rooms. Historically, the building was fully occupied with permanent rent stabilized tenants until 2005 when the landlord began to rent to tourists on a nightly basis. After a decade of operating as an illegal hotel, the number of permanent tenants has dwindled to approximately 70, effectively removing approximately 157 affordable SRO rooms from the housing market.
- 306-308 West 94th Street – These two adjacent residential SRO buildings have 225 SRO rooms. In approximately 2004, tenants complained of pressure and harassment by the landlord to move from 306 to 308 West 94th Street to make room for short-term rentals. As rooms became vacant, the landlord renovated them putting in flat screen televisions and bringing in maid service. Currently, there are only 5 permanent tenants remaining in 306 West 94th Street and approximately 40 in 308 West 94th Street, leaving approximately 180 affordable SRO rooms effectively removed from the housing supply.
- 240 West 73rd Street – A residential class A apartment hotel with 200 units, once fully occupied with permanent rent stabilized tenants. After several years of illegal hotel activity in the building only approximately 70 rent stabilized tenants remain. That is a loss of approximately 130 units to illegal hotel rentals.
- 316 West 95th Street/330 West 95th Street/315 West 94th Street – These three residential SRO buildings were the subject of litigation commenced by the City in 2007 based on rampant illegal hotel use in the buildings. Together, the buildings have 600 units of affordable housing. Historically these buildings were fully occupied with permanent rent stabilized tenants. Many tenants complained of harassment prior to and during the onset of the short-term rentals in the buildings. Currently, the buildings only house approximately 100 rent stabilized permanent tenants.

Further exacerbating our housing crisis is the effect that short-term rentals are having on sky-high rents in the City. According to an article in the *Gothamist* on August 25, 2014, rents across the City are increasing, giving the examples of Harlem was reported as seeing rents increase by 13.9% in rents over the past year; Bedford-Stuyvesant rents increased by 42% and Astoria also saw significant gains.³ With the advent of online platforms such as Airbnb over the past few years, short-term rentals have increased exponentially, rapidly depleting the City's housing stock and driving up rents.

³ http://gothamist.com/2014/08/25/airbnb_nyc_sandy_heroes.php.

The Attorney General's report details that thousands of residential units were used either primarily or exclusively for private short-term rentals. The report states that "[i]n 2013, over 4,600 unique units were each booked as private short-term rentals for three months of the year or more. Of these, nearly 2,000 were each booked as private short-term rentals on Airbnb for at least 182 days – or half the year." This illustrates the significant numbers of units that are effectively removed from the City's housing supply.

While Airbnb's continues to make unsupported claims that it has rid its site of the bad actors and that 90% of the hosts on its site are legal rentals, new data analyzed by Tom Slee directly disputes these claims and reveals that illegal rentals on Airbnb have only increased. The new data shows that – a mere six months after the Attorney General's report – nearly 60% of Airbnb's listings in New York City were illegal at the end of 2014, well after Airbnb claimed to have removed the bad actors from its site. In addition, the new data show the number of illegal listings has increased by over 2,300 since late 2013 and approximately 30% of Airbnb's inventory in New York City is listed by users who are illegally renting out multiple residential units, with 207 users renting out 5 or more units.

VI. Recommendations

The Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project urges the following action by this Committee and the Council:

- Work with the administration to increase enforcement of short-term rentals in residential buildings by the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement;
- Pass a resolution calling upon your colleagues at the State level to protect the Illegal Hotel Law passed in 2010 and not concede to any changes that would erode our rent regulations that protect New Yorkers;
- Issue a Public Service announcement informing New Yorkers about what illegal short-term rentals are and encouraging them to report them to 311;
- Explore legislation that would create a legal definition of "hostel" in commercial zones;
- Amend the Administrative Code to include illegal hotel violations as per se harassment in considering Certificate of No Harassment applications;
- Amend the Tenant Protection Law to include illegal hotel use as a form of harassment.

VII. Conclusion

Illegal hotels severely destabilize our communities on several fronts: short-term rentals in residential buildings negatively impact New Yorkers' quality of life who live in illegal hotels and create public nuisances; short-term rentals in residential buildings create fire hazards putting the lives of residents and tourists in grave danger; short-term rentals in residential buildings exacerbate our housing crisis by removing apartments from our already depleted housing stock and driving up rents in our communities. New York's history with illegal hotels clearly illustrates that the City and State have taken a stand against illegal hotel activity and resisted any compromises. Let's not stop now.



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Good afternoon Chair Williams and members of the committee. My name is Sarah Desmond. I am the Executive Director of Housing Conservation Coordinators (HCC), a 40 year old not-for-profit housing advocacy and legal services organization that is based in Hell's Kitchen and dedicated to preventing homelessness and improving living conditions for lower income residents. Thank you for conducting this hearing on an issue so important to our community and for the opportunity to testify before you today.

History

We first became aware about the growing problem of illegal hotel use back in 2005. Individual tenants, concerned about compromised building security and lack of quiet enjoyment of their homes, initially brought their concerns to HCC's attention. Typically owners had illegally converted vacant apartments or single room occupancy (SRO) hotel units for transient use in violation of use-related zoning regulations, fire code requirements and various other NYC Administrative Codes. These units were often scattered throughout a building or adjacent buildings and either controlled by a building owner or net leased to a third party operator. In SROs, owners frequently installed bunk beds in rooms for dormitory style rentals exacerbating overcrowded public hall shared-bathrooms among other living space problems. At that time, the illegal use was more localized in Hell's Kitchen, the west side and midtown, with available rooms advertised on *ad hoc* websites such as Jazz On, Hotel Toshi, or other third party operators. We soon realized that the illegal use presented a larger affordable housing issue, as permanent tenants were denied essential services in an attempt to push them out to make way for the more lucrative hotel use. Once vacant these units were illegally deregulated and disappeared from the housing market altogether in favor of the more lucrative short term rentals.

Now centralized platforms like Airbnb, VRBO and Homeaway (to name a few) has led to a rapid growth in this illegal rental industry, giving third party operators, building owners, enterprising individuals and individual homeowners and tenants alike an accessible platform to rent units on a short term basis.

The Illegal Hotel Working Group

In response to growing concerns, HCC, Goddard Riverside's SRO Law Project and the West Side Neighborhood Alliance (WSNA) joined with local elected officials and tenants living in affected buildings to form the Illegal Hotels Working Group in 2005. As illegal hotel use has spread citywide, more than 40 affordable housing groups from neighborhoods across the city have joined the campaign to end illegal hotel use. Today you will hear from many of the elected

officials and affordable housing advocates who share our concerns about the impact of illegal use on affordable housing in New York City.

What laws make short term stays illegal?

The NYS Multiple Dwelling Law (MDL) states that a Class A multiple dwellings, that is a building with 3 or more residential units, cannot be rented for fewer than 30 days. The Multiple Dwelling Law dates back to 1929 and is intended to protect our rapidly disappearing housing stock and help guarantee that when someone rents or buys an apartment in a residential building, s/he will be surrounded by other people who really live there.

In addition, NYC has very unique safety and fire codes for commercial hotels, intended to protect the lives of overnight visitors who are unfamiliar with building layouts and means of egress, particularly if a heavy smoke condition were to exist. NYC 's fire codes were strengthened in response to a fire in 1980 at the Stouffer Inn in White Plains that claimed the lives of 26 visitors because they were unfamiliar with the building's layout and egress. Units rented for short term stays that fail to meet commercial fire codes are also illegal.

What type of short term rentals are legal under the MDL?

It's equally important to point out what is legal under the law, namely –

- Renting a 1 or 2 family homes for any length of time;
- Renting a room in your apartment for any length of time, provided you are present during the rental

You no doubt will hear from a number of people today testifying that they rent out a room in their home –and as long as they are present during the rental, it's completely legal. You've all seen the cheery Airbnb ads in which a host makes breakfast for her guests – that too is legal under the law. Similarly, if you own a one or two family home and rent the unit(s) on a short term basis – that's also legal under the MDL.

How do short term rentals impact on affordable housing?

While this issue first came to our attention as a quality of life issue from neighboring tenants concerned about personal safety and noise issues, we soon realized that it presented a larger affordable housing issue for our community, as the lucrative short term rentals were steadily replacing permanent residential neighbors. Like many communities citywide, Hell's Kitchen

relies heavily on rent regulated units to provide affordable housing for low and moderate income families; thousands of units once rent regulated, are now illegally decontrolled due to illegal use.

Displacement of tenants and illegal deregulation of units

As the lucrative illegal hotel practice has exploded, all too often the permanent residential tenants are denied essential services or are driven out by the compromised living conditions and replaced with short term rentals. The best way to illustrate the impact on affordable housing is to take you through a few case studies of buildings in our neighborhood.

- 15-19 West 55th Street - The two adjacent buildings on West 55th Street originally housed 64 rent regulated apartments. Today, only 16 permanent rent stabilized tenants remain. The tenants have lived in the building since the 1970's, and many have raised families there. Though the current rent stabilized tenants are committed to staying in their longtime homes, the management seems determined to make their lives difficult. A few months ago the management applied for (and received) a DOB permit to demolish the buildings and construct a hotel, stating on the application that no rent-stabilized tenants were currently living in the building. Although that permit has since been revoked, the vacant units are being renovated and rented as illegal hotels, with bookings on a number of websites, including booking.com, hotelplanner.com and youtube among others. The construction noise, debris, dust and overall decrease in services and security has made life untenable for the 16 tenants, of whom, all but one is a senior. The two buildings show numerous violations for illegal hotel use and more than \$95,000 in Environmental Control Board (ECB) fines assessed.
- East Side, near Grand Central - This 14 unit building is now run entirely as an illegal hotel, save for two units that are occupied by rent-regulated tenants. One is a young woman; the other is a senior who has lived in the building for decades. The remaining 12 units are advertised heavily (in English and Spanish language websites, including hotels.booking.com, tripadvisor.com letsbookhotel.com, possibly airbnb.com youtube.com) as hotels. The location, near Grand Central, makes it equally attractive to tourists and traveling corporate employees. The tenants are harassed and intimidated by building management and are now facing being sued in housing court. The building has accrued more than \$100,000 in ECB fines for illegal hotel use.
- West 53rd Street - Only 8 permanent tenants remain out of a total of 28 apartments. The remaining 20 units are used for transient rentals. The permanent units are desperately in need of repair and those same tenants must wait 15-20 minutes to access a free elevator. Meanwhile, the hotel units boast large flat screen tvs, renovated rooms and Egyptian cotton sheets.

- West 47th Street – The West 47 Street block between 8th and 9th Avenues is overrun with illegal hotel use. On any given day you will encounter tourists with roller luggage speaking foreign languages. A quick scan of the DOB website pulls up 46 complaints in 12 buildings on the one block alone. One building has only two remaining permanent tenants and has accrued significant fines.

While the stories above are of the more egregious illegal hotel practices, we see throughout our community buildings with a handful of units converted to short term rentals and therefore not available for rent by a permanent tenant.

Major Capital Rent Increases

In a number of adjacent buildings on West 49th Street, the Orbach Group, who owns a number of adjacent tenements was granted a number of Major Capital Improvements (MCIs) rent increases to repair damage to the public areas and for replacing the building entrance doors damaged by the large influx of transient users. It is worth noting that the NYS Attorney General just announced that this same owner is currently under investigation for bringing frivolous lawsuits at these properties and others in Harlem.

Increases rents in surrounding areas

In an article published in April 2014, Gothamist made the correlation between neighborhoods steadily increasing in popularity on Airbnb and recent double digit rent hikes in those same communities (http://gothamist.com/2014/08/25/airbnb_nyc_sandy_heroes.php). For example, Harlem, which had 1,000 hosts at that time, experienced a 13.9% rent increase from the year prior; rents in Bed Stuy, with its 643 hosts, went up a startling 42% and Astoria also had significant gains. We anticipate that rents will continue to adjust upwards to account for short term rental income if these sites are allowed to operate unchecked. While Airbnb touts that its site helps New Yorkers pay their rent, it may instead be making it less affordable for everyone.

Places tenants at risk of eviction

Tenants, shareholders or condo owners who rent their apartments in violation of their lease or coop/condo bylaws or proprietary leases risk eviction. Renters may often not aware that many standard leases require the landlord's permission to sublet their unit for any length of time and usually prohibit profiteering. Tenants who engage in these actions place themselves in danger of being sued and perhaps evicted. As 90% of tenants are not represented by an attorney in housing court (and 90% of landlords are), it places the tenants in serious danger of being evicted.

Reduces the supply of housing

Finally, units used for illegal short term stays directly reduce the supply of housing overall. Following the tenets of supply and demand, housing prices naturally increase as units are removed from the market. Illegal hotel use drives up housing prices for all of us.

Impacts on permanent tenants

The City is home to 3.3 million housing units. We're on top of each other – literally. We share building entrances, hallways and common walls, we trust each other to adhere to social norms necessary to living in such close quarters. Our safety depends on knowing our neighbors. When people rent out units for illegal hotel use, they bring a steady stream of largely un-vetted strangers into our homes. If it goes wrong – it's our unwitting neighbors who bear the brunt of loud parties, overcrowded apartments, and strangers in the hallway, and yes, prostitution rings. We've heard stories of tourists who unknowingly let strangers in with them, leave the building door ajar because they have too few keys for a unit, or "palm" the buzzer to gain access to the building. Transient traffic in residential buildings brings a host of unwanted conditions – including vermin infestation, bed bugs and damage to public hallways and entrance doors. In addition, you've seen the horror stories in the paper, many of which have happened on the west side, including the tenant who returned to find an orgy in full swing, a prostitution ring operated out of a short term rental, the person who posed as a real estate broker and scammed desperate New Yorkers looking for permanent housing by taking security deposits for a non-existent lease on the short term rental, the couple who was videotaped in their Airbnb rental and a tenant who came home one day to find that her roommate had, unbeknownst to her, rented out his room to tourists.

Impacts on Neighborhoods

Interestingly, a city as different from New York as Key West, Florida grappled with this issue back in 1997. Although Key West originally permitted licensed transient rentals, the City of Key West reversed that decision in 1997, citing "that the use of residences in a residential zoning district as quasi-hotel rooms caused neighborhood disturbances; and that the removal of residential units from a longterm housing stock ... had a detrimental effect on affordable housing prices." (http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/clerk/briefs/2004/1401-1600/04-1506_JurisInI.pdf). Similar to the NYS Multiple Dwelling Law, the City of Key West defined transient rentals as occupancy for less than 30 days. Perhaps most interesting, is that despite the fact that Key West's housing stock (which is largely comprised of single family homes) is vastly different than New York City's dense multiple dwellings, the experiences of the two cities with respect to impacts on affordable housing and quality of life are very similar.

How the laws are enforced

The Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement (OSE) is charged with enforcing the laws associated with illegal hotel use, including the NYS Multiple Dwelling Law, NYC Housing Maintenance Code, NYC zoning laws and NYC Building – including fire -- codes. The OSE Task Force that

inspects “4A” or illegal use complaints placed through 311 includes inspectors from the Department of Buildings, FDNY, Department of Health, Department of Finance and the NYPD. Due to its limited resources, as of early 2014 the lag time between complaint to inspection was upwards of 4-6 weeks. Violations placed by OSE are heard before the Environmental Control Board. The City has also played a key role in commencing affirmative litigation against flagrant violators, including:

- The 2007 lawsuit against 3 SRO owners on the Upper West Side to prohibit short term rentals.
- The 2011 lawsuit against Robert Chan’s “Smart Apartments” /”Hotel Toshi” alleging that it represented its short term rentals on its website as legal hotel units when in fact, they were not. The resolution of this case included establishing a \$1,000,000 fund to reimburse defrauded consumers.
- And more recently the August 2014 case seeking an injunction against two owners whose buildings were exclusively marketed as illegal hotels.

The NYS Attorney General’s Investigation

Last year the New York State Attorney General engaged in a very public battle with Airbnb seeking release of Airbnb’s user data as part of an investigation into illegal listings. As opposed to embracing transparency, Airbnb fought the subpoena bitterly. The data eventually turned over to the Attorney General reveals what many of us suspected all along – the 72% of Airbnb’s listings in New York are in apparent violation of the law.

The Attorney General’s October 2014 report, “Airbnb in the City” analyzed Airbnb bookings from January 2010 through May of 2014 (<http://www.ag.ny.gov/pdfs/Airbnb%20report.pdf>). Their findings include:

- 72% of all Airbnb rentals in NYC are to rent the entire apartment and therefore illegal.
- Commercial users dominate the site and earn a disproportionate share of the revenue -- 6% of its “hosts” control more than 1/3 of the units and earn 37% of the revenue; with 1,406 users earning \$168 million.
- Each mega “host” controlled between 3 to 272 listings each.
- More than 2,000 units are booked for more than ½ the year.

Although Airbnb was well aware that its income in NYC was dominated by 6% of its “hosts”, it delayed removing the 2,000 blatantly illegal listings as long as possible. Given that Airbnb earns a fee of up to 15% of the total amount spent on each booking, there is no incentive to self-police, particularly when it means eliminating the biggest income generators.

Recent analysis of Airbnb data

A more recent analysis of Airbnb listings performed by Tom Slee using data publicly available on its website, found that the number of illegal listings by Airbnb has actually increased since they were forced to purge 2,000 blatantly illegal listings from its site. His findings include:

- In November 2014, about 15,300 Airbnb listings were for the “entire apartment” which is illegal. This represents a net *increase* of 2,300 illegal hotel units over the past year.
- By November 2014, the number of users who were illegally renting out 2 or more units on the site actually *grew* by about 700 users to 2,764 users. Those users also increased the number of units they listed in the aggregate (from 6,911 total units to 7,413 total units). Approximately 30% (vs. 33% in 2013) of their NYC inventory was from users who were renting out multiple units on the website.
- In November 2014, 207 users controlled 5 or more units.

Conclusion

We are having this discussion at the same time New York City is facing an unprecedented housing crisis. Nearly 60,000 New Yorkers will sleep in a shelter tonight. In this context, permitting the loss of rent regulated units and diminishing the housing supply overall is unconscionable. New affordable units are important, but we cannot build ourselves out of this crisis. It’s time to get serious about preservation. We need a strong commitment from the NYC Administration that it will dedicate the necessary resources to end illegal hotel use in New York including:

- Increased budget allocation and staffing for the Office of Special Enforcement to fight illegal hotel use.
- Public Service announcements to call 311 to report illegal hotel use, as many people don’t realize that it is illegal and that they can place a complaint.
- Proactive affirmative litigation NYS and NYC to police sites like Airbnb and those who profit from illegal activities.

It’s time to stop talking and act to end illegal hotel use.

Committee on Housing & Buildings Hearing

January 20, 2015

RE: Oversight: Short Term Rentals – Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing Neighborhoods?

Testimony on impact of illegal hotels on residential building by Matt Thomas (West Side Neighborhood Alliance, member)

Years ago when I moved into the building tenants came to stay. Some even died of old age there. But for the past several years it's all changed. Tenants are constantly moving in and out. None stay long enough for longtime residents to get to know them. In fact it's gotten so bad that the other day when I ran into the long time (35+ years) super's wife in the hallway she commented that even she had no idea who lived in the building anymore. That is because there are very few full time tenants because there are so many illegal hotels.

Around five years ago I began noticing all these strange people in the building. The tourists came in with suitcases from everywhere. I saw them come and go; they would follow me into the building. They left doors open with no regard for whoever might enter. They expected me to let them in because they said their companions "had the only key," something that shouldn't happen with legitimate tenants. I wanted to ask who they were but at this point I'd always be asking because there is never a time there is not a tourist in my residential building.

My building is no longer a residential building; a home. Any sense of community among tenants has been destroyed. Aggressive landlord tactics marginalize tenants and illegal hotels are a manner to harass tenants. I cannot say for certain that the landlord is running the illegal hotels because the whole business just seems too murky to me, but even before the illegal hotels began showing up the landlord had begun converting the place into a short stay residence, thereby preventing a strong stable tenant base that could oppose his illegal actions against us.

The anonymity of tourists has killed the residential feel of the building and compromised security. This increases pressure on me being one of the few rent regulated tenants still in residence. However the landlord very much had a presence – he had an office in the building. In other words the landlord knew what was going on.

I do not feel comfortable in the building I have lived in for decades because of the parade of strangers coming and going. I urge the City to enforce the law and not to change it.

Contact:

Matt Thomas

826 9th Avenue

Apt.#6RN

NY, NY 10019

212-757-3120

'Matt Thomas' mmthos@yahoo.com

January 20, 2015

TO: The City Council of New York, Housing and Building Committee

FROM: Diane Francis, condo owner in 301 W. 57th Street, New York City, 10019

RE: A ban on Airbnb and all short-term rentals in multiple-unit dwellings due to the personal and financial danger to neighboring owners or tenants that their business model presents and their tax evasion and contravention of zoning bylaws.

I have owned a condo in Manhattan since 2005 and have fought, and helped win, a ban of Airbnb and other short-term rental intermediaries in my building. I wrote about the dangers and legal injustices concerning Airbnb in the *New York Post* in December, where I am a regular contributor.

My objections, as related in *The Post*, are the following:

1. Condos and coops in Manhattan screen owners and tenants before allowing occupancy then restrict access to their guests or suppliers for safety reasons. Airbnb and other short-term rental intermediaries do not screen renters (financially or criminally), thus circumventing building rules.
2. In December, 301 W. 57th Street banned short-term rents and stated that longer term rentals – six months for furnished condos and one year for unfurnished -- must be approved by the building's Board of Managers.
3. Airbnb has gone from couch sharing (with the "host" present in the unit) to a de facto and illegal hotel chain that doesn't meet hotel-standard Fire Code, Building Code and inspection requirements. It doesn't provide security staff to protect neighbors or daily entry by cleaning staff to monitor users and usage.
4. Airbnb and others expose condo or coop corporations (and users) to significant legal liability for damages or to injury by violent or criminal persons.
5. New York City, and the state of New York, should ban Airbnb, One Fine Stay and others in this space, then monitor them regularly.
6. Significant fines and legal action should be undertaken against guilty parties, as my condo company has pledged to do.
7. Hotel taxes and fines should be collected, retroactively, against Airbnb, et al.

In a city where office buildings are guarded like Fort Knox – for good reason – there must be action to crack down on short-term, tax evading rentals that expose the public and residents to similar dangers.

Respectfully,
Diane Francis

My Post article link:

<http://nypost.com/2014/11/23/how-airbnb-makes-cities-less-safe/>



777 Tenth Avenue, New York, NY 10019 T: 212-541-5996 F: 212-541-5966

January 20, 2015

Committee on Housing & Buildings Hearing

RE: Oversight: Short Term Rentals – Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing Neighborhoods?

Testimony from Bennett Baumer, Housing Conservation Coordinators, community organizer

Contact: BBaumer@hcc-nyc.org; 212-541-5996 x.16

Thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns about short term rentals and illegal hotels. I am an organizer at Housing Conservation Coordinators, a Hell's Kitchen based legal services organization; I have worked with community members and tenants along the West Side for eight years.

I began seeing illegal hotels, commercial rentals of less than 30 days to tourists in residential apartment buildings, and in Upper West Side single room occupancy buildings. SRO building owners saw converting their residential units into commercial hotels as capturing "the highest and best use" in the parlance of real estate. This wreaked havoc on the quality of life of the residential tenants. The West Side Neighborhood Alliance, a grassroots community group on the west side organized protests and pressured the City to crack down. We marched; we wrote letters. Assembly member Linda Rosenthal even spent a night at one of the illegal hotels.

Working with our NYS elected officials, we passed the 2010 Illegal hotel legislation and then Council member Brewer passed a fines bill to put teeth in the law. The Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement investigates illegal hotel complaints and levies fines if the operator is caught in the act.

Now centralized platforms like Airbnb, VRBO and Homeaway (to name a few) has led to a rapid growth in this illegal rental industry, giving third party operators, building owners, enterprising individuals and individual homeowners and tenants alike an accessible platform to rent units on a short term basis.

Illegal hotels are all over Hell's Kitchen and the Upper West Side now and spreading citywide. A cursory glance on Airbnb's website and you can rent an apartment throughout many of the buildings where I've worked with the tenants. In particular, I've worked with Orbach Group/Lighthouse tenants in 14 buildings along West 49th Street

between 8th-9th Avenues. Tenants complained of the usual suspects: the hard partying tourists next door, intercom buzzers at all hours of the night, early morning vomit on the stairs and wear and tear on the building. Orbach installed a key swipe system for the building entrance doors, and now, any key swipe opens the door to any of the 14 buildings on the block! Working with former Speaker Christine Quinn's office we drove the illegal hotels from the block only to see them come back.

In addition, Orbach was recently granted a number of Major Capital Improvements (MCIs) rent increases for public area repairs and for replacing the building entrance doors damaged by the large influx of illegal hotel guests. Now permanent tenants have to pay more directly as a result of the illegal use.

Lastly illegal hotels are a threat not only to quality of life of residents, a neighbor's character but also to the entire City's housing stock. Property owners seeking to capture the highest and best use for their real estate may seek to remove tenants for more lucrative illegal hotels. These property owners could also in lieu of illegal hotels charge even more rent to compensate for NOT doing illegal hotels. The City has the tools to combat illegal hotels and enforce the law. The City should enforce the law.

FOR THE RECORD

East Village Community Coalition
143 Avenue B – Simplex
New York, NY 10009
o- (212) 979-2344
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www.evccnyc.org



January 20, 2015

Jumaane Williams
Chair, Committee on Housing & Buildings
NYC Council
New York, NY

Dear Chairman Williams:

On behalf of the East Village Community Coalition, I thank you for the opportunity to deliver testimony on the effect of the short-term rentals on our neighborhood. Our experience in the East Village shows that AirBNB and other short-term rental services destabilize our city's residential communities by reducing the available housing stock, compromising safety, and offering questionable economic value.

According to the 2014 report from the Attorney General's office, the East Village and Lower East Side are among the three sections of Manhattan responsible for more than 40% of citywide earnings for AirBNB. With so much of the share of this sort of (mostly) illegal activity, the effects of housing loss and community impacts are palpable here.

The East Village contains a significant portion of the City's remaining affordable housing and public housing. The housing systems help to promote stability in the community where residents invest their time and skills to improve their buildings, create community gardens, and volunteer locally. As a neighborhood with great economic and ethnic diversity, the social connections between residents not only make the community special and healthy but help give political voice to many middle-class and low-income residents. Transience due to the student and young professional flows have threatened these connections. AirBNB has enabled people to profit off their rental units, contributing to the transience of the community and a sense of insecurity for some long-term residents. The short-term rental market also further motivates some landlords to destabilized units legally or otherwise.

Safety concerns are paramount to this debate, particularly in old tenement buildings with no doorman nor secondary means of egress. Most AirBNB rentals are in buildings with long-term tenants who assume all other risks and inconveniences when their front door keys are distributed to strangers. In 2013 the City recognized these concerns and was awarded one million dollars in a case against notorious illegal hotelier Toshi, which issued violations to an East Village property at 325 East 10th Street.

East Village Community Coalition
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The company and its supporters will argue today for the purported economic benefit its platform provides for New Yorkers. The attorney general reports that more than one third of revenue is not for regular New Yorkers, but for larger-scale commercial operations repurposing residential units for quick commercial gain. From the visitors, the economic benefit claim is also shaky. Much of the benefit to our communities is truly economic displacement, omitting the spending that residents would do if they occupied these units full-time. Please also consider that the retail demands of tourists are distinct from those of the long-term residents that anchor a community. The growth of this activity fans the flames that are displacing mom-and-pop stores, local services, and community spaces, making it harder for residents to get by.

Some will argue that they have personally benefited from legally – or more likely – illegally using a short-term rental service to “make ends meet.” That fix serves the few at the expense of the many. Not all New Yorkers can or would choose to use a site like AirBNB. We are all facing the challenges of increasing rents, stagnant wages, and the raising cost for goods. Some subsidize their incomes while others pay with the compromises to safety, social connection, and comfort.

Legalizing this commercial activity in residential units is not a fix for New Yorkers. I urge the City Council to work to orchestrate true housing reform that undergirds the fabric of our great communities for the benefit all New Yorkers.

Thank you once again for your consideration of the short-term rental market in our residential communities.

Regards,

Sara Romanoski
Managing Director

STUYVESANT TOWN – PETER COOPER VILLAGE TENANTS ASSOCIATION

Testimony before the
Committee on Housing and Buildings
Honorable Jumaane D. Williams, Chair
January 20, 2015

Short Term Rentals – Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing Neighborhoods?

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Susan Steinberg

Jonathan Wells

President Emeritus
Hon. Steven Sanders

I am here today to stand against short-term rentals not just in rent-regulated but in all multiple-dwelling buildings. I ask that this committee put forward legislation that amends the appropriate HPD codes to clearly and unequivocally prohibit short-term rentals in these buildings.

My name is Susan Steinberg and I represent the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association. Our Manhattan community is a small town of more than 11,230 apartments on 80 acres.

In 2011, our tenants association began receiving numerous complaints from affected neighbors about the negative impact of short-term rentals in their buildings. Our community has long been a haven of middle- and working-class housing, and these short-term rentals threaten long-term affordable housing not just in our community but also in communities across this city.

You see, AirBnB-style rentals tempt otherwise law-abiding tenants to make a quick buck on their rent-stabilized apartments by unlawfully renting their apartments as hotel rooms. This is known as creating an “illusory tenancy,” and the tenant becomes vulnerable to eviction, and once evicted, through the insidious *vacancy destabilization* loophole (otherwise known as vacancy decontrol) that unit is deregulated and is lost forever.

In addition to the attack on long-term affordability, there are quality-of-life and safety issues. Our tenants association received complaints from tenured tenants who challenged entry into their buildings by persons unknown who lacked keys. These turned out to be short-term renters and in one report just became angry and just pushed their way into the building. Mr. Chair, tenants have a right to know who their neighbors are.

And what about a building’s rules? These short-term renters are not schooled in NYC recycling rules and laundry room etiquette, they create

FOR THE RECORD

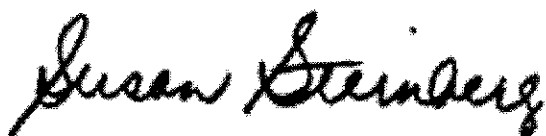
STUYVESANT TOWN – PETER COOPER VILLAGE TENANTS ASSOCIATION

noise, and they add undue wear and tear on the building's infrastructure.

Lastly, there is the very real correlation between short-term rentals and an increased presence of the prolific and hard-to-eradicate bed bug. Our own online bed bug registry -- which tracks reports in all 110 buildings -- showed a clear increase of reports for buildings which also shared reports of short-term rentals. The resulting inconvenient bed bug inspections -- the awesomely burdensome bed bug remediation requirements -- these should be reason alone to prohibit short-term rentals in apartment buildings.

Mr. Chair, we urge you to pass legislation prohibiting short-term rentals in residential multiple-dwelling buildings. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Steinberg". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Susan Steinberg, Board Chair

FOR THE RECORD

Illegal Hotels City Council Hearing – Tuesday January 20, 2015

My name is David Schneiderman and my wife and I have resided at 15 West 55th St. in Manhattan as Rent Stabilized tenants for over thirty eight years. Our building and its adjacent building (19 West 55th St.) are sister buildings and have been considered and sold as one property.

When we first leased our apartment in June of 1976, the building was comprised of rent controlled and rent stabilized apartments. The policy under the two previous landlords was to warehouse every apartment that became vacant. The apartments have remained empty or in some cases rented out illegally for commercial tenants. Some apartments have been kept vacant for over 30 years.

On November 20, 2013 a new landlord acquired the two buildings and began extensive renovations and alterations in the apartments and public areas.

Our Tenants Association discovered that several apartments in 19 W. 55th and apartments in 15 W. 55th were completely furnished and then rented out for short terms of one to thirty days. On line these apartments are referred to as “5th Avenue Suites” and can be reserved on the internet as hotel rentals on: hotels.com and booking.com.

The two buildings are not set up to receive transient guests. I have met and spoken with some of these occupants who came from South America, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and from many parts of the United States. They rented these apartments as hotel rooms or suites. Some for a day or two, a week or for short stays of less than 30 days.

We do not have any of the emergency, fire or security systems required by a hotel. Neither building has sprinklers and the building staff is not trained or conversant in how to deal with the needs and issues of the transient visitors. Strangers come and go into the buildings at all hours of the day and night. Our doormen are supposed to be present from 8:00 AM to midnight. Often times there is no doorman or staff member present in our building after midnight. My wife has come home late at night and when the elevator door has opened – she has been startled to encounter individuals unknown to her, who were drunk and unruly. There is no security in our building because all the illegal guests have the entry code to the building. Also, there are no checks or balances about who enters, who occupies the apartments and who is roaming through the building.

Most of our rent stabilized tenants are senior citizens and all of us feel threatened by this unsafe atmosphere.

A visit to the NYC Department of Buildings web site lists as many as twelve violations related to illegal hotel usage for 19 West 55th St. amounting to \$80,700.00. There are such violations for 15 West 55th St. amounting to \$15,550.00. These violations date back to April 2014 and none of them have been paid.

The illegal hotel violations accumulate, but the guests keep arriving. As I previously mentioned they come as hotel guests for short stays of fewer than thirty days. The law is constantly being broken without any remediation of these obvious and indisputable misdemeanors.

Testimony of Audrey Smaltz
New York City Council
Committee on Housing & Buildings
January 20, 2015

Good morning. My name is Audrey Smaltz. Thank you for letting me come give my side of the story today.

I moved into my apartment at 15 West 55th Street in 1977. That building has been my home and its tenants have been my neighbors for over 35 years. For many years, everyone in the building knew one another and there was a genuine sense of safety and community.

Now, things have started to change. My friends and neighbors are being replaced by strangers and tourists thanks to websites like Airbnb and others who allow people to rent out their apartments.

Of the 37 apartments in my building, only 7 are currently inhabited by rent-stabilized tenants. The entire 4th floor is short-term rentals, as are many units on the 3rd and the 8th floors.

Apartments in our building are not just listed on Airbnb, either. They are also listed on booking.com and hotels.com. The landlords are running an illegal hotel business.

We don't want that. We are all senior citizens and want to live in the same safe, peaceful building we have always lived in.

Not only have we lost our sense of safety, but the landlord has chosen to ignore our requests for necessary repairs. Instead, they're doing extensive renovations to make the vacant apartments more appealing to short-term tenants because they make a lot more money with short-term stays.

Not long ago, one of the tourists staying in my building wandered onto my terrace. It was a terribly frightening experience that made me realize just how vulnerable of a position my landlord has put me in by choosing to profit over safety and community.

I hope my story has helped you all to see that short-term rentals do nothing but harm to the communities that New Yorkers like me and my neighbors spend years working to build.

Illegal Hotel Testimony

January 20, 2015

Betsy Eichel, Tenant Organizer, Housing Conservation Coordinators

My name is Betsy Eichel, and I am a tenant organizer at Housing Conservation Coordinators, a tenant advocacy and legal services organization based in Hell's Kitchen. Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I work with tenants throughout the West Side whose lives have been very disrupted by the proliferation of illegal hotels in this area. They worry about their safety when strangers have keys. They are frustrated that their right to quiet enjoyment is violated when their home becomes a place where tourists come to party, drink or engage in activities that are even more dangerous.

However, it is not just the security concerns that worry tenants and advocates. Illegal hotels pose a very real threat to affordable housing in Hell's Kitchen and surrounding areas, neighborhoods that are already nearly impossible for low and moderate- income tenants to afford.

Airbnb disingenuously claims that it is helping the hard luck New Yorker, but in my experience working with tenants has shown that by making it easier to rent apartments to short-term guests, it makes it that much harder for New Yorkers to find a permanent housing. Landlords know that they can make much more money using their rental units exclusively for short-term guests. This problem predates AirBnB, but these platforms make the transition of units from “regular” apartments to illegal hotels that much easier. Landlords are looking for ways to take advantage of the scorching hot housing market, and short-term stays are another method to achieve this. For example, I work in one building where units have been left vacant for years—in the midst of a housing crisis—and those units are now posted on booking.com, hotels.com, and similar sites. Tenants who desperately need housing are short-changed in favor of tourists. What’s more, the elderly, rent-stabilized tenants who do live in the building face major cutbacks in services because the super, doormen and other staff are catering to the guests. The management in this particular building was always looking for ways to avoid renting

valuable units to rent-stabilized, long-term tenants, and the illegal hotel business provides an easy loophole.

I also live in the Upper West Side myself, so I know firsthand how expensive housing is in this part of the city. I have a small room in a 3-bedroom apartment. Though I can understand why a person in a similar situation may want to keep one of those bedrooms vacant and rent it out on a short-term basis, it would be impossible for many young people or people of lesser means to live in the Upper West Side if these rooms were used to house tourists instead. My 3-bedroom apartment has helped me and countless others get a foothold in the city, and the same could be said of the SRO's on the West Side. My concern is that platforms like AirBnB encourage people to monetize their units to the maximum degree, and in so doing, make it even more difficult for regular tenants like myself to find even a small room.

Thank you very much for your time.



Tuesday, January 20th, 2015

**Written testimony respectfully submitted to NYC Committee on Housing and Buildings by
Melissa Chapman, Senior Vice President for Public Affairs at the Brooklyn Chamber of
Commerce.**

Hon. Jumaane D. Williams, Chair
Hon. Antonio Reynoso, Member
Hon. Eric A. Ulrich, Member
Hon. Helen K. Rosenthal, Member
Hon. Karen Koslowitz, Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Member
Hon. Rafael L. Espinal, Jr., Member
Hon. Ritchie J. Torres, Member
Hon. Robert E. Cornegy, Jr., Member
Hon. Rosie Mendez, Member
Hon. Ydanis A. Rodriguez, Member

Good morning Chair Williams, other members of the NYC Committee on Housing and Buildings; and guests.

My name is Melissa Chapman and I serve as the Senior Vice President for Public Affairs at the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce (BCC). I am delivering testimony on behalf of Carlo A. Scissura, Esq., President and CEO of the BCC.

BCC is a membership-based business assistance organization, which represents the interests of over 2,000 member businesses, as well as other businesses across the borough of Brooklyn. The Brooklyn Alliance is the not-for-profit economic development organization of the Chamber, which works to address the needs of businesses through direct business assistance programs.

We applaud the NYC Committee on Housing and Buildings for convening this forum that seeks to evaluate the impact of short-term rentals on the economy and to address existing concerns.

From an economic standpoint we are of the view that legal short-term rentals have the potential to add significant revenue to neighborhoods by boosting tourism, increasing foot-traffic along commercial strips and increasing support to cultural establishments especially in the outer boroughs. For individuals who are un-employed, or under-employed, renting space within the existing guidelines of New York State law; can provide a reliable source of income that may not have otherwise existed.

Airbnb reported that in 2014, the Airbnb community in New York generated an estimated \$768 million in economic activity and supported 6,600 jobs. Offering tourists varied accommodation options is an important aspect of tourism in our city, and Airbnb is an alternative for tourists that want to experience New York like a local. According to Airbnb, since 2008, more than 26 million guests, including 2.1



**Brooklyn Chamber
of Commerce**

million in New York State, have reported having a positive experience traveling on Airbnb.

Like any other system, there are gaps which must be addressed so that positive economic impact and stability in neighborhoods are no longer conflicting ideas, but can exist side by side.

Today's hearing is a good start, as it continues much needed dialogue on the concerns and recommendations on both sides. Finally, we urge city and state lawmakers to review Airbnb's offer to collect and remit tourist taxes on behalf of their hosts, which would help to close any existing tax loopholes and provide \$65 million in tax revenues to the economy.

Thanks again to the NYC Committee on Housing and Buildings for facilitating today's hearing.

CAS/mc

Oversight: Short Term Rentals – Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing Neighborhoods?

Testimony before the City Council Housing & Buildings Committee, January 20th, 2015 by Robert Seidel, Owner of the Lorelei Bed and Breakfast and member of the NYC B&B Association

Good afternoon. My name is Robert Seidel. I own and operate the Lorelei Bed and Breakfast in the West Midwood section of Brooklyn. I have been a homeowner in the Ditmas Park community for more than 20 years, am a past-president of the West Midwood Community Association, and am still active on its Board.

The Lorelei B&B has been operating for more than nine years. We incorporated the business in New York in March 2005, carry Bed and Breakfast insurance, and collect relevant taxes on behalf of the NY State and City Departments of Finance.

Despite our compliance with tax and safety issues, some of us were targeted by aggressive inspectors from the DOB, acting undercover and posing as potential guests as a ruse to enter our homes, while others banged on my porch windows to intimidate. As a result, we have been fined with penalties that we can ill afford, and some of us have closed.

We have welcomed guests from all over the world. Many were visiting local relatives to attend important life events. Our guests prefer B&Bs instead of impersonal hotels because they seek meaningful interpersonal experiences with their hosts.

As proud ambassadors of New York City and Brooklyn we've helped visitors navigate the City while providing a haven at the end of the day. Our guests support small businesses in our community like the many outstanding restaurants and other mom and pop stores on Cortelyou Road, Coney Island Avenue, and Newkirk Plaza. Our guests represent the diversity that is the very fabric of the neighborhood.

For several years, Brooklyn B&Bs were invited and advertised by the Brooklyn Borough President's office in its national and international initiatives promoting tourism to Brooklyn. We can all agree on the success of these efforts as Brooklyn is once again a brand unto itself. I am proud of their part in these positive developments.

Why do people choose our B&Bs? TripAdvisor offers the answers. TripAdvisor is one of the world's largest travel websites, providing user-generated reviews of their experiences. The services are free for everyone. All B&Bs are included in the short-term rental category.

Currently, 162 separate B&Bs are listed in the New York City segment, primarily in Manhattan and Brooklyn. The thousands of individual reviews written by former guests are overwhelmingly positive. Major themes of those reviews include: appreciation for comfortable, one-of-a-kind accommodations near family; friendly personal attention from the owner/operators; excellent guidance about local dining; feeling a new, enhanced connection to New York City; feeling they have found a home away from home; and looking forward to returning.

These comments offer further testimony to the significant contribution B&Bs make both to our neighborhoods' small businesses and to our neighborhoods' vitality and stability.

Thank you.

Robert Seidel
Loralei Bed and Breakfast
667 Argyle Road
Brooklyn, NY 11230
646-228-4656
www.loraleinyc.com
info@loraleinyc.com



JENNIFER W. ACKERSON
Sales *Marketing *Promotions
Travel/Tourism Consultant

11 Alexander Avenue
Farmingdale, New York 11735
Tel. (631) 756-1102 *Cell (917) 817-9886
Email: jackerson@alonmarketing.com
Website: www.alonmarketing.com

January 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I have had the honor of working for Brooklyn Tourism for 6+ years and watching Brooklyn develop as a tourism destination. The world's eyes are on Brooklyn as a HOT travel destination to visit for many intriguing reasons. During the time I have been involved promoting Brooklyn, I worked closely with the established B&B's of Brooklyn as they offer a unique and special experience outside of staying in ordinary chain hotels. The B&B's have been able to give international visitors the ability to see Brooklyn and it's people from the inside showcasing the way they live and the beautifully designed establishments they have built that give visitors a unique and personal side of Brooklyn. The B&B's help to stimulate the economy because tourism keeps these local neighborhoods busy with visitors spending dollars in the stores, restaurants, on attractions, transportation, etc. that would not otherwise be there. Word-of-mouth reviews to friends and families after staying in a Brooklyn B&B provide an attractive positive positioning for the reputation of Brooklyn.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Ackerson

Jennifer Ackerson

President, ALON Marketing Group

From: Marcia M [mailto:caroGeorge055@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, January 18, 2015 4:52 PM
To: Robert Seidel
Cc: Rosaly Kozbelt
Subject: Re: Request from the Lorelei B&B

Dear Robert,

We definitely want to support you and the Lorelei in any way that we can; your b&b has played such an important part in our ability to visit family in New York that we want to be sure it is fully protected and supported long-term.

As you know, our daughter Rosaly and her family live just blocks away from the Lorelei, on Argyle. We feel incredibly lucky to have found the Lorelei when she and her husband had their first child, almost eight years ago, and their apartment became too small to accommodate us as overnight guests on our frequent visits to see them. There are no hotels in the area, and we have never found another inn close by that offered your level of service and comfort. It's no small feat to run a professional business that makes guests feel they're "at home"--but you've done it consistently, for years!

The availability of the Lorelei has given us the opportunity to visit Brooklyn regularly and to get to know it, its businesses and events, better than we could have otherwise. If we were forced to lodge further away from our daughter's apartment, we would have to spend too much time travelling to her home to be able to enjoy what her (and your!) amazing neighborhood have to offer. Tucked in your quiet corner of the metropolis, the Lorelei offers us an important base for all the other activities we enjoy in New York.

We hope you will secure the legislation needed to protect the Lorelei and keep it in business for years to come. We are sure that Rosaly, our New Yorker in residence, is equally eager to support the Lorelei, a little neighborhood jewel. (We've cc'ed her on this letter so she can be sure to know what's going on.)

Let us know if we can be of further help.

Sincerely,

Marcia and Mory Mani
St. Louis, MO
314 275-2999

Lance Tukell

From: Lorelei <info@loraleinyc.com>
Sent: Monday, January 19, 2015 4:19 PM
To: 'Lance Tukell'
Subject: PLS PRINT - FW: * Request from the Lorelei B&B

From: Alec Berezin [mailto:aberezin@dworkenlaw.com]
Sent: Monday, January 19, 2015 12:44 PM
To: Lorelei
Subject: RE: * Request from the Lorelei B&B

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of retaining and enhancing business opportunities for owner occupied bed and breakfast establishments in New York. I am a semi-retired attorney from Cleveland; my wife is a retired audiologist. We have two children and a grandson in Brooklyn, and we have been coming yearly to Lorelei Bed and Breakfast for the past several years to spend Thanksgiving with our family.

We of course make other trips to New York to see family, but when we stay for an extended period, we choose a bed and breakfast. Our experiences have been tremendous in terms of quality of services and accommodations – we describe the Lorelei as our “home” in New York – that’s what it feels like. And just like other home owners or tenants who live in New York, we support the businesses in the neighborhood. Some of the owners and managers in several restaurants along Cortelyou greet us as frequent guests when we appear. We are always at the Food Co-op, the wine shop, and the toy store during our stays. We have pumped a significant amount of money into the local economy during our stays.

We would encourage whatever legislation that would empower and improve the viability of the bed and breakfasts in the city. Our children, who are voters in Brooklyn, would echo our sentiments. They too have become patrons of the local businesses – even when we are not there - another added economic boost to the small businesses which are the backbone of the economic and social vibrancy of the community.

Very truly yours
Alec & Marcia Berezin

Alec Berezin
Dworken & Bernstein, Co., LPA
Email: aberezin@dworkenlaw.com
60 South Park Place
Painesville, Ohio 44077
440.352.3391 phone
440.352.3469 fax

1468 W. 9th St., Suite 135
Cleveland, Ohio 44113
216.861.4211 phone
216.861.1403 fax

Sunday, January 18, 2015

To whom it may concern:

We have chosen the Lorelei Bed and Breakfast as a place for out-of-town family to stay on every occasion it is available. It's a safe, comfortable, above-board option in our neighborhood for friends and family to stay in.

It makes our neighborhood more accessible to visitors; it allows us to contribute to the local economy; and makes high-priced Brooklyn a more livable spot for at least some of our neighbors.

It also allows us to feel more connected to our neighborhood by getting to know our neighbors. Not to mention the fact that we have traded information about some more great local businesses with the owner! (Domino on King's Highway comes to mind!)

Thanks for considering this information.

Meredith Phillips
1710 Avenue H
Brooklyn, NY 11230
mopsyhop@gmail.com



The Lorelei B&B, Brooklyn



Hi, Robert SIGN OUT USD

Brooklyn Hotels Flights Vacation Rentals Restaurants Things to Do Best of 2014 Trending Now More Write a Review

United States New York (NY) Brooklyn Brooklyn B&Bs / Inns

Search for a city, hotel, etc.

The Lorelei B&B

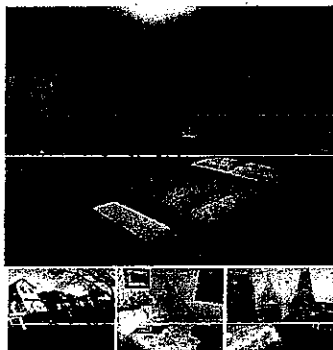
All 58 Brooklyn B&Bs / Inns

Saved

667 Argyle Road, Brooklyn, NY 11230

Hotel amenities

Overview Reviews (147) Photos (38) Location Amenities Q&A



37 traveler photos

Ranked #2 of 58 Brooklyn B&B and Inns

147 Reviews

We can't find prices for this accommodation

Our online travel partners don't provide prices for this accommodation, but we can search other options in Brooklyn

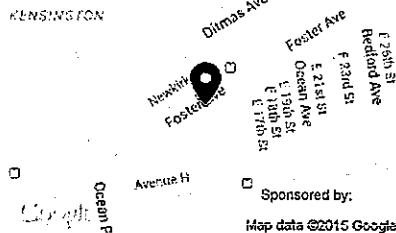
Check In Check Out

Related hotels...

- BEST WESTERN Plus Prospect Park Hotel**
Great Value!
648 Reviews
Brooklyn, NY
- The Condor Hotel**
Great Value!
712 Reviews
Brooklyn, NY
- The Box House Hotel**
Great Value!
399 Reviews
Brooklyn, NY

Browse nearby

Hotels (51) | Restaurants (4,531) | Things to Do (460)



147 reviews from our community

Write a Review

Traveler rating	See reviews for	Rating summary
Excellent	138	Families 25
Very good	7	Couples 62
Average	1	Solo 16
Poor	1	Business 11
Terrible	0	

147 reviews sorted by: Friends first | Date | Rating Season: All months English first



tom t
Falmouth, Massachusetts
1 review

"A Great Decision"

Reviewed 4 weeks ago

My wife and I made a great decision when we stayed at the Lorelei over the Thanksgiving holiday. From the first contact to driving away our experience was positive. Robert was a most gracious and experienced host, and unobtrusively sought out the opportunity to be accommodating, a rare and joyous quality. His home was wonderfully decorated in a period style, and our room, including the bed, was very comfortable. There was a very nice blend of choices for breakfast, and "continental" understates it's quality. The neighborhood was residential with tree lined streets, and we felt comfortable as we walked around, enjoying the diversity of the period homes and apartment buildings. There's a great mix of shops and restaurants nearby, and there was always a parking place at the house thanks to Robert making the driveway available. We are looking forward to our next trip to Brooklyn, which will have to be planned so we get to stay at the Lorelei again.

Stayed November 2014, traveled as a couple

Value Location Service

Friends' activity nearby

- Dekoven Suites**
0.1 miles from The Lorelei B&B
Susan Lehrer has been to this hotel
- The Farm on Adderley**
0.5 miles from The Lorelei B&B
Flatbush Development Corp likes this restaurant
- Rugby Gardens**
0.5 miles from The Lorelei B&B
Sue Fishkin has been to this hotel
- The Burger Bistro**
3.3 miles from The Lorelei B&B
Alison Morea likes this restaurant
- Staten Island Ferry**
5.3 miles from The Lorelei B&B
Paul Lipman rated this attraction



ww027
Cambridge, Massachusetts
1 review
1 helpful vote

Less

Was this review helpful? Yes

Ask ww027 about The Lorelei B&B

This review is the subjective opinion of a TripAdvisor member and not of TripAdvisor LLC.

"Warm hospitality from Robert"

Reviewed November 13, 2014

My spouse and I enjoyed the stay at Lorelei. Robert was a great host. The breakfasts were freshly prepared and very good. Every morning Robert would talk with us, providing tips about site seeing, restaurants, Brooklyn etc. He was so friendly that he even offered to give us information if we really would move to Brooklyn as we said.

The neighborhood was quiet and beautiful with many old trees.

We went to NYC multiple times before and Lorelei made it easy for us to visit places in and around Brooklyn. It was also very convenient to travel to Manhattan as well - the subway stop was just a short walk away.

Stayed October 2014, traveled as a couple

Value	Rooms
	Service

Less

Was this review helpful? Yes 1

Ask ww027 about The Lorelei B&B

This review is the subjective opinion of a TripAdvisor member and not of TripAdvisor LLC.

30 more recommendations from Flatbush, Paul and Kim

25 friends have been to Brooklyn & nearby towns



« » 1 - 24 of 25



XBoneIP
Los Angeles, California
Senior Reviewer
6 reviews
Reviews in 3 cities
2 helpful votes

"We've stayed here several times"

Reviewed October 28, 2014

and every time has been an excellent experience. Robert is very helpful in giving advice on local attractions. We eventually bought an apartment in the area so we could be closer to our daughter and family and Rob gave us advice and recommendations on local contractors! The house is very nice with two bedrooms on the second floor, one with a large bathroom ensuite. The other bedroom(s) are down the hall with a nice, windowed bathroom available at the end of the hall. No one shares either bath. Breakfasts are always fresh and wholesome with fresh fruit, breads and cereal available as well as coffee, tea, juice and milk. A great place to stay while visiting NYC.

Stayed November 2013, traveled with family

Location	Service
Sleep Quality	

Less

Was this review helpful? Yes

Ask XBoneIP about The Lorelei B&B

This review is the subjective opinion of a TripAdvisor member and not of TripAdvisor LLC.

Explore Brooklyn

- Brooklyn Bed and Breakfast
- Brooklyn Hotel Deals
- Brooklyn maps
- Newark Liberty Intl Airport Hotels
- John F. Kennedy Intl Airport Hotels
- La Guardia Airport Hotels
- Hotels near Medgar Evers College
- Hotels near Stevens Institute of Technology
- Hotels near Hunter College



Hotels around Brooklyn

- Mondrian SoHo Hotel
4.0 out of 5, 878 reviews
Last reviewed Jan 15, 2015
- The Harbor House
4.0 out of 5, 109 reviews
Last reviewed Jan 14, 2015
- Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott New York Manhattan / Downtown East
4.0 out of 5, 91 reviews
Last reviewed Jan 11, 2015
- Midwood Suites
3.0 out of 5, 65 reviews
Last reviewed Jan 11, 2015
- Seton Hotel



Brian A Manlius, New York
Reviewer
3 reviews
3 hotel reviews
Reviews in 3 cities
18 helpful votes

"Excellent Stay! Long Overdue Review"

Reviewed September 29, 2014

This review is late in being complete. But, we stayed at the Lorelei a year ago and enjoyed a most wonderful stay. We were in the area looking for an apartment for our son (was starting his first job out of college) and the host, Robert, was super helpful! He offered great advice on restaurants and attractions to see in the area. We did find an apartment for our son, but it wasn't going to be ready for another day or two. He was able to stay at the Lorelei for another two days until things were ready and Robert made our son feel very welcome.

AIRBNB STATEMENT

- Hello my name is Jonathan
- Let me begin with a quote from the musical The Wiz. "When I think of home. I think of a resting place. A place where there's peace, quiet, and serenity. When I think of home, I think of a place where's there's love overflowing"
- As an artist and independent contractor and a private citizen who has had my home apartment featured in the 2010 Habitats column NY Times Real Estate section. I love my home, I really love my home. It's not an apartment or a dwelling for me – it's my home.
- Well my landlord has within the past five years, polluted that home, as illegal occupants parade non-stop throughout my building. They are not my neighbors, they are not my friends, they are not my colleagues, they are not my relatives, they are not the causal acquaintance, they are illegal occupants reeking havoc in my home.
- My home is no longer peaceful, nor quiet, nor serene. It has become a hotel, a dormitory, an event space, a bed and breakfast, and most significantly and recently a flophouse, a whorehouse.
- Most recently as of Nov 2014 my home was turned into a brothel as the escort service, Rentboy.com where by four men of an Eastern European were advertising their services complete with a Google geo map location of my home. Can you imagine the horror on my mother's 81-year face when confronted by these escorts? This was eventually raided and the individuals were arrested in addition to drugs and several safety and fire violations were reported and are being monitored by the police. This has caused severe disturbances not only in my home but building wide resulting in a breach of security, confrontations, public safety and fire hazards and an severe infringements to my warranty of habitability.
- Furthermore the tourists who arrive advertise on craigslist's online parties as and are running social events and parties until all hours of the morning. My home is now as an event space. The level of noise, infraction of safety and fire

codes, the smoking of marijuana, and god only know what else, the hanging out in public hallways, not to mention severely intoxicated individual who stumble and fall down stairs and out of the building, the level of noise, all has become unbearable.

- In addition to this there has been several thefts of USPS and packages occurring inside the building. This I am sure I need not tell you is a national and state federal crime.
- I am all for free enterprise, but at what expense?
- I have been a legal, lease holding tenant for 30 years in my midtown west studio apartment.
- I work very hard for my hard earned money so that I can enjoy and except, and will demand, a warranty of habitability that is legal and respected.
- This is my right and I have to expect the upholding of this from my city officials.
- The issues this has created in my home is a not only a private, but a public nuisance, by introducing an intense transient element to my neighborhood. Tourists unwittingly infringe on my quality of life, creating conflicts and then they are gone. Times Square has always been colorful this is what I love about it but it has become a freak show, anything goes mentally - this all has to STOP!
- If I move out, which they only way I will is in a pine box, then those profiting behemoths from this have won, there has to be a solution to this situation I can only hope that we can all find one that is equitable to someone like me "the little guy" who also has to earn a buck to keep the lights on.
- Thank you for your time.



nyc

January 20, 2015

I want to thank Chairman Williams and the members of City Council Housing and Buildings Committee for providing me with the opportunity to speak in support of legitimate Bed and Breakfast (B&B) owners who have become unintended targets of the illegal hotels law and subsequent crackdown.

My name is Vinessa Milando and for 17 years I have been the proud proprietor of Ivy Terrace B&B. I am also the president of STAY-NYC and on the board of The Empire State Bed and Breakfast Association.

Stay-NYC was formed 4 years ago. It is a non-profit association of B&B owners that pay hotel tax, occupancy tax and state and city sales tax. Our businesses are registered with the City of New York as small facilities operators, we carry liability insurance, operate transparently and average only 5 rooms. Our small buildings have no rent regulated units and we have been providing high quality accommodations to travelers for more than 17 years. While illegal hotels and AirB&B rentals continue to be a serious quality of life issue for many, our brick and mortar B&B's have become the unintended targets of this law. We operate transparently and, because of that, we have suffered greatly. As a result of the well-meaning 'illegal hotels law', 10 of our small, tax-paying businesses have closed in the past two and a half years. That's 10 out of only 16 that existed in Manhattan in 2010.

Despite being registered with the city and state, our businesses have been given steep fines and told to close. Professional innkeepers, who have spent thousands of dollars on stand-alone websites restoring their small historic properties and providing professional hospitality, have been dragged into Environmental Control Board court and treated like criminals. One B&B owner, who had been in business since 1986, sustained \$192,000 in losses due to ONE visit by the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement. This business had never received a complaint in over 20 years and was a great asset and friend to the community. Now they have closed, sold the building, and moved out of state. My business is 19% down this year. Ivy Terrace, my B&B, suffered over \$180,000 in losses and fines the very first year the law was enacted. This includes fines, legal fees, loss of business, etc. This is unacceptable, that fully tax-compliant, registered, women and minority-owned small businesses such as ours should be fined and told to shut our doors.

(more...)

In 2010, before the law went into effect, we were assured by our State Legislators that we would not be affected. Clearly, this has not been the case. In good faith, we have continued to collect and remit our hotel taxes to the city and state, and sales taxes to the State. We have met with members of the NYS Senate and Assembly, The Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement, Bloomberg Administration, Department of Buildings, and City Council, yet no relief has been forthcoming. We are a small, but important, industry and we deserve distinct considerations. We do NOT co-mingle overnight tourists with permanent residents, we do NOT affect affordable housing, we do NOT flip rent-controlled apartments into youth hostels, and we were NOT party to the conflicts which were the basis of this law 4 years ago. We are distinctly different than hotels, but we are just as legitimate. We are professional innkeepers, who preserve historic residential properties, we're good neighbors, we help our local economy and we're well liked in our communities. We desperately need your cooperation to find a solution so our businesses can survive. Please work with us and the Mayor's office before all the registered brick and mortar B&B's in the city are gone.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to speak. I look forward to working with you to find a solution.



Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums
INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

FOR THE RECORD

250 West 57 Street • Suite 730 • New York, NY 10107-0700

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING & BUILDINGS
REGARDING OVERSIGHT OF SHORT TERM RENTALS**

Tuesday, January 20 2015

'HOME RULE' IN COOPERATIVES & CONDOMINIUMS

Good morning Chair Williams and members of the Committee.

My name is Mary Ann Rothman and I am executive director of the Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums, a membership organization comprised of housing cooperatives and condominiums located throughout the five boroughs of New York City and beyond. More than 170,000 New York families make their homes in our member buildings, which span the full economic spectrum from very modest housing to some very upscale dwellings.

Others will discuss the legal aspects of the growing number of unregulated short term rentals in our city. Others will also make the point that there is a significant difference between 'hosts' who are present to receive their 'guests' (and, presumably offer some level of supervision of their activities in the building) as opposed to 'guests' with full, unfettered access to vacant units. CNYC seconds these comments and shares all concerns about safety and building integrity.

But I would like to focus specifically on ways that cooperatives and condominiums are affected by this issue. Co-ops and condos are self-governing communities, run by boards that is elected by the shareholders and unit owners. Every cooperative and condominium, can, therefore, set its own policy with regard to 'guests' in the building, so long as these policies conform with all appropriate laws.. We respectfully request that this right be acknowledged in the text of any law that may result from these hearings.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our views.

My name is Alison Greene and I live on 88th st on the Upper West Side. I feel like my story is that of an average New Yorker and I want to share with you how Airbnb has been an incredibly positive part of my being able to live in NYC.

I lived overseas for years and moved back 9 years ago with a deposit ready to buy an apartment in the City. However, I found both the job market and economy very difficult and it actually took me 7 years before I could get a mortgage and buy my dream home.

6 months after moving in I found myself unemployed. Panicked about losing my apt I spoke to friends and one of them suggested that I host on Airbnb. I had never heard of it but after seeing how everything was set up, airbnb made me very comfortable and safe so I listed my apartment.

That was two years ago and I was very lucky to find a job two months later but since I had to take a paycut I decided to continue hosting to supplement my income. Airbnb was critical to my financial survival and it saved my home, but I also found that I really enjoyed the experience.

I usually say that my airbnb guests are 'friends I just haven't met yet', and in many cases that's exactly what they are. A lot of times we've emailed before they arrive and when they roll their suitcases through my door we greet each other like we already know each other. So I welcome them into my home, offer them a drink and we sit down and I tell them where to get the best coffee or the most amazing brunch in the neighborhood as well as a list of neighborhood restaurants. They usually have questions that I'm happy to help them with before they head out to explore NYC. They're usually so excited to see the city that most of them have only dreamt of visiting, and in some

cases they didn't even think they could afford to visit. I love helping them discover NYC and their enthusiasm is contagious. I found that I enjoy seeing NYC through their eyes and I pride myself on ensuring that my guests have a great time. Airbnb has been a financial necessity and in exchange we've become some of the cities most amazing ambassadors giving visitors a glimpse of NYC beyond Times Square. I have copies of my reviews and you can see the positive experiences my guests have had.

NYC has been an incredibly difficult place for me to live.

Anywhere else in the US I'm probably considered middle class but in NYC I constantly feel like I'm simply treading water. Saving money for vacations or retirement feels like a luxury I can barely afford but it's more of a reality due to airbnb. In politics I've heard them talk about a tale of two cities but I feel us airbnb hosts are somewhere in the middle of that – we're typically the

middle class but NYC simply isn't achievable for us with nothing but 9 to 5 jobs.

We implore you that we want to be able to keep doing this and not to underestimate the tremendous value of airbnb not only to NYC but to it's locals, local neighborhoods, and businesses.

Please allow airbnb to work with the community to create sensible solutions.

Edit Profile
(https://www.airbnb.com/users/edit?id=6002631)

Reviews About You Reviews By You

Photos, Symbol, and Video
(https://www.airbnb.com/users/edit?id=6002631§ion=media)

Past Reviews

Trust and Verification
(https://www.airbnb.com/users/edit_verification?id=6002631)

Reviews are written at the end of a reservation through Airbnb. Reviews you've received will be visible both here and on your public profile.

Reviews
(https://www.airbnb.com/users/reviews?id=6002631)



(/users/show/25473627)

Helen Papathanasiou
(https://www.airbnb.com/users/show/25473627)

Allison was a great host. This is the first time I have done airbnb. I wasn't sure if I was going to feel awkward staying at someone's apartment. But Allison made us feel comfortable. She was fun to talk to and very knowledgeable about the city. She gave us tips on places to visit. Thanks to her we found this awesome restaurant called Spring. The apartment is in a nice residential area.

Leave Response

References
(https://www.airbnb.com/users/references?id=6002631)

View Profile
(/users/show/6002631)

What Helen loved about your listing:

The location, the ease of coming and going since it was on the first floor. At the hotel you have so many people coming and going. Staying here made it more private and less hectic.

What Helen thought you could improve about the experience:

I think that the host is perfect. She is a nice, thoughtful person.

January 2015



(/users/show/6545069)

Diego Mantelli
(https://www.airbnb.com/users/show/6545069)

We really spend a very comfortable stay with Alisson and her cat Lulu. The apartment was awesome. Very clean and close of the 86th 1 Line that will you connect to all city corners. Alisson waited for us with a couple of papers with the "most do" or "most visit" places in NYC. Lovely person who will always give you a hand. :) THANK YOU SO MUCH !!

Leave Response

January 2015



(/users/show/21331071)

Joana Chavez
(https://www.airbnb.com/users/show/21331071)

My experience was awesome!! Alison is a sweet heart and the place is very clean and cozy! Place looks just as it does in pictures. I am very picky and was a bit scared that the place was not going to be as described but this place was great no complains. The bed was very comfy as well. I would definitely recommend this place to everyone. Location is the best as well!

December 2014



(/users/show/22398022)

Ann

We were made to feel very welcome inspite of arriving much later than we had expected. Alison provided a list of places to eat which was very helpful and information on how to get around the city. The bed

Past Reviews

Reviews are written at the end of a reservation through Airbnb. Reviews you've received will be visible both here and on your public profile.



Helen
Papathanasiou

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[Leave Response](#)

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January 2015



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[Leave Response](#)

January 2015



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Chavez

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December 2014



Ann
Waterhouse

We were made to feel very welcome inspite of arriving much later than we had expected. Alison provided a list of places to eat which was very helpful and information on how to get around the city. The bed was the best although the restricted head room might not be to everyone's liking! We had a wonderful few days in New York and this was a great place to come back to each evening.

December 2014



Minggus
Pelupessy

We had a wonderful time at Alison's place. She is very kind, give you tips about local hotspots/restaurants and she will help you if you have Some questions. The bed was very comfy! Loulou is very sweet. Thanks for staying

November 2014



Victoria
Hecq

I stayed with a friend at Alison's for a week and everything was perfect. The place is actually bigger than anticipated! It's very homy, nice and comfortable. The ceiling of the mezzanine - where the bed is - is quite low, so you literally have to crawl into bed, but that wasn't an issue for us. The bed is super comfy, the shower was clean, nice and warm. We felt very welcomed by Alison and got all sorts of useful information from her. We also loved coming home to a little ball of fur she calls her cat. Loulou is obsessed with suitcases and boxes. Good thing we brought plenty of those!

What Victoria loved about your listing:

Hi Alison, Thank you, everything was perfect! Thank you for trusting us into your home and with your lovely cat! And thank you also for sharing your coffee, it is the best! :)

What Victoria thought you could improve about the experience:

I want more cats. But maybe that's only me! Haha

November 2014



Alejandra
Segura

I'm gonna write my review in Spanish! La experiencia de hospedarme con Alison fue muy buena. Ella vive en una zona privilegiada de Manhattan, muy cercana a los lugares más turísticos y trendy de NYC. Es muy amable, nos imprimió una lista con lugares interesantes para conocer, el departamento estaba muy limpio y contamos con todo lo que ofreció.

What Alejandra loved about your listing:

Alison es una gran anfitriona, la zona es maravillosa, y su gatita Lulu es un amor. Gran experiencia

What Alejandra thought you could improve about the experience:

Tal como ella lo mencionó, el techo donde se encuentra la cama es bajito y eso puede ser incómodo, pero nada grave.



Sasha
Sabsowitz

Alison was such a lovely hostess. Her apartment was super cozy and her gorgeous fluffy cat lulu made it feel even more like home. The kitty stays to herself but might let you pet her :) the bed in the upper loft area was super comfortable and the garden in the back was so pretty. Alison had a ton of great suggestions for places to go and see as well as her favorite restaurants. She's super friendly, easy to talk to and genuinely cares about her guests! Please stay here with Alison!

October 2014



Cindy
Cole

Alison was there to welcome us and get us settled. She had lists of places to eat in the area and was very helpful for us. Alison is very sweet and made us feel at home. We slept great in the comfy king sized bed! She even had a fan in the loft which was great because we always sleep with a fan on. Had a great time in New York and Alison's place is in a great neighborhood. Such a good location and gracious hostess!

What Cindy loved about your listing:

Alison was a great hostess and we enjoyed staying with her!

October 2014



John And
BJ Carrillo

Alison was great! She texted to meet us while we were in the cab on the way from the train station. Good timing so we felt very welcome. She gave us a key and the lay of her place and we were off. She has a super nice cat and the mattress in the loft was very comfortable. We slept so good we had a hard time getting up in the morning. Alison even made bacon wrapped dates and left some for us! So nice. Our best night was when we went to a Piano Bar she recommended. She knows the city very well. The neighborhood is primo. You feel like your in the movie "You've got mail" . Lots of places to eat, shop, families walking around, central to the whole city and safe. Funny side note: Alison has had many visitors and in her nice clean shower is a graveyard of shampoo from around the world, all left by previous visitors from



Marina
O'Byrne

My daughter and I had a lovely stay with Alison. She is a wonderful host - friendly and very helpful. She gave us a list of great places to eat in the neighborhood and lots of interesting information about the area. The location is superb - safe, quiet and close to Riverside Park, Central Park and lots lots more. The apartment is lovely and the bed is really comfortable. We will definitely stay with Alison again.



Response from Alison:

Marina and Kate - I'm looking forward to welcoming you back and I'm so happy you had a great trip! Keep in touch:-)

What Marina loved about your listing:

Alison, safely back home in Ireland now after a lovely week in New York. Thank you so much for making our first two nights so great. It was lovely to meet you (and Loulou of course) and Kate and I had a wonderful time. We'll definitely be back.

October 2014



Good host! Good experience! Very convenient location!

October 2014

Scarlet
Wu



We stayed at Allison's for 8 days while in New York, and we really enjoyed ourselves. She was helpful and accommodating, and we are thankful for all the advise she gave us. We would highly recommend staying at Allison's for others considering a trip to New York.

September 2014

Emma
Holleran



Nancy@Wahl-
Scheurich.Com
Nancy@Wahl-
Scheurich.Com

Alison is a warm and welcoming host and I enjoyed meeting her. She provided great info about the neighborhood which made my stay even better. The loft is as advertised in that you can't stand up, but I was expecting that and was very comfortable in the bed and able to function in the space. The location is fantastic, especially if you're a runner, because you have either Central Park or the river path to chose from. The neighborhood is great and subway is close so you can easily get anywhere. Will stay there again if I can!



Response from Alison:

Nancy you are welcome back anytime - consider me your 'go to' place in New York. And besides next time you come you have to run in the Park to compare it to the River:-) It was great to meet you.



Shraddha
Girdhar

Alison was so welcoming and friendly! We only stayed for a night, we would of loved to stay for longer. It was really easy to get to her place and it was so close to metro and other amenities. The bed was super comfy! Exactly what we needed. Def recommend this place. The ceiling is low in the loft room but she does explain it, it was like a little adventure. Would stay here if we were back in New York.

September 2014

Honorable Jumaane D. Williams
Chair, Committee on Housing and Buildings
New York City Council

RECORD

Dear Mr. Williams:

I'm a 30-year, rent-stabilized resident of Stuyvesant Town.

For the past several years, the tenant in the uncarpeted apartment above mine has been doing regular short-term rentals.

That's why in the evening I often hear new people trooping in, not realizing how little soundproofing there is in Stuyvesant Town.

That's why I am frequently awakened at night, as I was this morning at four, by overhead noise.

That's why I struggled with a bedbug infestation for over a year--until my neighbor realized it was hurting his business and took remedial steps.

I'm in my 70s and still work part-time as a freelance editor. And I find it increasingly difficult, under the circumstances, to enjoy my apartment, get a good night's sleep, and function effectively.

Are short-term apartment rentals in New York City a good thing? Not for me.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Morrow



86 WEST 119th STREET NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10026

January 15th, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

As an HDFC that converted to coop just over a year ago, we have already experienced shareholders using their apartments for Airbnb rentals. While those illegally renting out their apartments enjoyed the income gained from their rentals, other shareholders in the building were not as enamored with the experience. Every week, there would be a new group of tourists in our lobby trying to find their way to their short-term rental unit. The increased traffic of unfamiliar people with keys to our front door posed a potential security risk to our building and its residents.

Shareholders renting out their apartments posted detailed floor plans and photographs of their apartments and the interior and exterior of our building on the internet site advertising their units. The terms of our building's HDFC governing documents do not allow for short-term rentals and these advertisements quite visibly threatened our HDFC status as well as provided too much information, accessible to anyone, about the building.

Additionally, due to poor management prior to coop conversion, our building had experienced bedbug issues that required an extraordinary amount of effort, inconvenience and tens of thousands of dollars to remediate. The revolving door of travelers staying in our building potentially compromised all of the progress we had made in bedbug remediation.

If someone owns their own freestanding home, the consequences of renting their home out as an Airbnb rental affect only that homeowner. Most residents of New York City, however, live in apartment buildings. The consequences of such short-term rentals affect the immediate community of neighbors that live in the same building. Only the resident who is illegally renting their apartment reaps the benefits of the short-term rental while the neighbors of that resident shoulder all of the risks and receive none of the benefits.

Lenox Court HDFC does not support Short-Term Rentals.

Sincerely,
The Board of Directors
LENOX COURT HDFC



My name is Maritza Silva-Farrell and I am the Coordinator of Real Affordability for All (RAFA) – the largest affordable housing coalition in the city, comprised of more than 50 housing organizations.

The affordable housing crisis is reaching extreme heights, and as advocates for the creation and preservation of affordable housing, we have fought against numerous threats on behalf of tenants across the city. Now, we are facing a new threat—Airbnb and illegal hotel companies who are breaking the law and robbing NYC of scarce affordable housing in order to turn a massive profit.

With the arrival of Airbnb, the housing problem has become far worse, affecting tens of thousands of residents, rent-regulated apartments, de-regulated rental housing units, and co-ops and condos in neighborhoods throughout New York City.

The effects of Airbnb on affordable housing are felt most seriously in the neighborhoods where the issue is most critical. The high concentration of users of Airbnb are where affordable housing is scarce and rents are most expensive (such as Midtown, Upper West Side and Greenwich Village), or where rent increases are forcing out long time residents (such as Bed Stuy, Harlem and Williamsburg).

Airbnb exacerbates New York's housing crisis by incentivizing landlords and tenants to take units off the market, so they can make more money off them as short-term rentals. Airbnb and similar online platforms are encouraging them to violate New York State law.

According to the New York State Attorney General's Office, approximately two-thirds of New York City Airbnb units are being rented illegally.

The service has created a dangerous underground market, unregulated by law and inconsiderate of detrimental effects to the residents of our city, like decreased public safety and diminishing affordable housing stock.

Airbnb is not helping our families' economy by helping them pay their rent. To the contrary, the rent wouldn't be so high if illegal hotels weren't taking thousands of apartments off the market.

Mayor de Blasio has made it a priority to reverse the housing crisis by expanding New York City's affordable housing stock with an additional 200,000 units over the next 10 years, but that reversal won't be effective if the city does not put a stop to Airbnb and illegal hotels.

Thank you

NYC Council Hearing on Illegal Hotels

Kerri White

Director of Organizing & Policy, Urban Homesteading Assistance Board

Since 1973, UHAB has guided over 1,600 buildings from distressed rental housing to affordable, HDFC co-ops. In our experience, co-ops have withstood the challenges, like gentrification and speculation that have debilitated other types of low and moderate income housing in NYC. However, affordable co-ops are not immune to threats to their stability, and one such threat is posed by sites like Airbnb which can raise serious legal and safety concerns for HDFC co-op residents.

According to Airbnb TV commercials and ads from other short-term rental companies, hosting traveling strangers in your apartment is an easy way to bring in some much-needed cash. For HDFC residents, however, short-term rentals can pose a financial and safety risk to the entire building.

HDFC co-ops and rentals were created—with taxpayer money—expressly to provide long-term housing for people with low incomes. These buildings receive ongoing tax breaks and other subsidies that keep apartments affordable.

This government funding comes with residency restrictions. So one resident using an HDFC apartment for short-term rentals can jeopardize the affordability of the entire building by putting its financial subsidies at risk, not to mention the security of the families who live there.

New York requires that apartments be used as private residences and stipulates that they may not be rented for transient, hotel, or motel purposes. It is prohibited in New York to sublet an apartment for less than 30 days—unless the shareholder is also present in the unit. So hosting multiple visiting strangers during the course of a month is illegal in HDFCs when the shareholder is not living in the apartment during that time.

Additionally, Airbnb can cause safety and quality of life problems for HDFCs beyond the financial and legal implications such as:

- Short-term renters—whose backgrounds have not been checked—also don't know residents and may let in other strangers behind them when they enter buildings.
- These visitors are usually on vacation, so late-night activities may mean that they return to apartments at late hours, disturbing building residents.
- They often don't follow New York City trash and recycling regulations, resulting in sanitation fines for the HDFC.
- The extra water usage and wear and tear (on both the individual apartments and the buildings' public spaces) caused by multiple short-term renters may end up increasing expenses for all residents.
- Building insurance doesn't cover commercial use of apartments.

Airbnb and other sites promoting short term rentals in NYC raises many concerns. Using Airbnb and other short-term rental companies, landlords are keeping apartments off the market for long-term renters, shrinking the city's overall housing stock. This drives up prices, making affordable apartments even more difficult to find. In NYC we are in the middle of an affordable housing crisis, there are not enough affordable apartments for New Yorkers who need them for their families, there is certainly not enough affordable housing to have it used as illegal hotels.

Delsenia Glover, Rent Regulation Lead Organizer

New York State Tenants & Neighbors

Testimony as Prepared

January 20, 2015

New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings

**Re: Oversight: Short Term Rentals - Stimulating the Economy or Destabilizing
Neighborhoods?**

Good morning. Thank you to Chair Williams and to the Housing and Buildings Committee members for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Delsenia Glover and I am the Rent Regulation Lead Organizer for New York State Tenants & Neighbors Information Service and New York State Tenants & Neighbors Coalition, two affiliate organizations that share a common mission: to build a powerful and unified statewide organization that empowers and educates tenants; preserves affordable housing, livable neighborhoods, and diverse communities; and strengthen tenant protections. The Information Service organizes tenants in at-risk rent regulated and subsidized buildings, and helps them preserve their homes as affordable, and organizes administrative reform campaigns. The Coalition is a 501c4 membership organization that does legislative organizing to address the underlying causes of loss of affordability. Our membership organization has over 3,000 dues-paying members.

Tenants & Neighbors organizes in rent-regulated, Mitchell-Lama, and project-based Section 8 developments citywide. In the buildings where we organize, the story is the same. Low and moderate income tenants in New York City are regularly experiencing the pressures of displacement. Rents are climbing and tenants are concerned that they will not be able to afford to stay in their homes and communities. Although short-term rentals are promoted as supporting low and moderate income tenants to help to pay increasingly unaffordable rents, this practice plays out with vast detrimental effects. Many of the operators of short-term rentals are in fact landlords who are warehousing affordable rent-regulated apartments and exacerbating an already significant affordable housing crisis.

This year in particular is significant for the affordable housing movement because the rent laws sunset in June 2015. While Tenants & Neighbors and our allies in the tenant movement are lobbying to change laws in Albany to repeal vacancy deregulation and close loopholes that create the affordability crisis in rent regulated housing, we are here to stand against the practice of warehousing apartments, of operating apartments as illegal hotels, and of breaking the terms of the law that was won in 2010 with advocacy from the tenant movement to restrict illegal hotels. Rent-regulation is the largest source of affordable housing for low- and moderate-

income tenants, and is largely concentrated in historic communities of color that are now rapidly gentrifying. The city has lost hundreds of thousands of affordable rent-regulated units, and tenants living in rent-regulated units are increasingly unable to afford to pay the rent. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of units in New York City renting for less than \$1,000 declined by over 400,000. Overall, from 2002 to 2011, there has been a 39% loss in rental apartments that low-income households can afford. Airbnb creates an incentive to take units off the market. In the first five months of 2014, Airbnb postings increased from 2,652 to 16,483 units. Commercial renters are the landlords of a disproportionate set of the apartments with 6% of the hosts supplying 36% of the units and earning 37% of the revenue. The city cannot afford to lose one more affordable apartment.

Illegal hotel legislation was an important step forward in the struggle to preserve affordable housing; Airbnb practices take us backwards and intensifies the crisis. The Attorney General found that nearly three quarters of all Airbnb listings were illegal, and the practice of warehousing affordable apartments was rampant. All organizations and Councilmembers whose constituents are low and moderate income know the crisis well; it is very challenging to find affordable housing, both due to the low vacancy rate, and due to the loopholes in the rent laws.

As the tenant movement is pushing a series of reforms to strengthen the rent laws, it is imperative that tenants not lose ground for hard-won protections. We look forward to working with the Council to find real solutions to the affordable housing crisis and with increased oversight restrict those actors who are contributing to the crisis.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today.

Dear NY City Council members,

This is Jesse Zhu of 307 W.79th Street, Imperial Court Hotel, which is a single room occupancy residential building in Manhattan. I have lived that premises for more than 20 years. In 2005, the premises was converted to transient hotel, even though the building's Certificate of Occupancy is for permanent residency.

After this "illegal occupancy" conversion, tenants' life became up-side-down nightmare. In peak travel season, the building lobby was either like JFK airport Check-In/Out area or United Nation cafeteria, tourists in long lines. The front desk personnel were busy during tourists check-in/out, and because of this, tenant could not get their mail in a timely matter. We feel as if we are 3rd class tenants.

Financially, the landlord's illegal hotel business was so good that he began to rent room at \$349 per night. To push tenants out, the landlord used constructive eviction method, and forced some tenants giving up and moving out.

The followings are what the landlord has done:

1. Non-stop Frivolous litigation

Before 2005, there were hardly any lawsuits being filed by our landlord against his permanent tenants. But after 2005, the landlord retained attorney's year-around and filed numerous hold-over proceedings against tenants in housing court. And majority cases were dismissed due to ground-less.

My wife and I went through 3 hold-over proceedings in housing court filed by the landlord. Fortunately, all those 3 baseless cases were dismissed by the judge, with the assistance of the SRO Law Project.

2. Theft

My wife and I have a communal kitchen, which is shared with 2 other tenants. The kitchen door used to have a lock. In Dec. 2009, the landlord removed the locks from the kitchen. After the locks were removed, all the soft drinks, beers, milks and juices were missing on a daily base. The transients thought that this was free food provided by the hotel. With the help of NY State, NY City council members and SRO Law Project Office, finally the lock was reinstalled.

In the summer of 2014, the landlord started recruiting short-staying "international students" trying to beat NY City 30-day minimum rental law. After those short-stay foreign students moved in the building, they gained accessed to some communal kitchens and helped themselves to tenants' kitchen wares, as well as taking food and drinks from tenants' refrigerators. Whenever those students finished cooking, they left tenants' cooking wares in the sink for days without washing. We had to clean up after them.

3. On-going construction without permit

The landlord has done most of the construction work in the building without building permits. There was a major face-lift to the lobby. And these kinds of jobs are still going on. The building's layout has been altered dramatically. Most small conjunctive units have been merged in to bigger ones, so-called "river-view suites" which are featured on the landlord's commercial web site.

4. Repair issue

Although there is non stop construction to the building, the landlord has refused to do any of the repairs necessary for the communal space and many of the rooms which house the permanent tenants.

Thanks for your time.

Regards,
Jesse Zhu
307 W.79th St.
Apt. 914
NY, NY 10024

Tel: (718)927-8195 (Day)
(646)258-7280 (Cell)

Yonatan Tadele, Cooper Square Committee
Airbnb/Illegal Hotels Testimony – 1/20/15

Good morning, members of City Council; my name is Yonatan Tadele. I am a Tenant Organizer and Counselor for the Cooper Square Committee, a community non-profit serving residents of Manhattan's Lower East Side. Much of my day-to-day work involves assisting local tenants in resolving any housing issues they may have.

I am here today to discuss the impact of illegal hotels on the Lower East Side. Ours is one of just three NYC neighborhoods that account for one-third of all Airbnb's occupied units; the LES alone covers 41% of Airbnb's total revenue in NYC.

I hope that last figure begins to dispel the myth of Airbnb's "sharing economy," where every renter is well-meaning and simply looking for a little extra cash. Not quite; in fact, the Attorney General's Oct. 2014 report on illegal hotels notes that 37% of all host revenue was taken in by just 6% of all Airbnb operators. That means an usually high number of Airbnb units are controlled by large-scale commercial users offering anywhere from 10 to over 100 units at a time. Keep in mind, these are units that have been removed from the city's already-dwindling rental stock.

These commercial users -- often times, independent hotel operators (Hotel Toshi, for instance), or profit-hungry landlords -- have been a nightmare in the Lower East Side. Because of gentrification, and the area's status as a tourist destination, there exists a constant financial incentive to harass and displace existing tenants in favor of higher-paying "hotel" guests. The pressures these long-term tenants face is staggering: some have been nagged with buyouts, while others have been left fearful by the lack of safety and security measures that accompany many illegal hotels. In one building Cooper Square worked with, tenants were even physically pursued and interrogated by their landlord in an attempt to get them to relinquish their rent-stabilized units.

Legitimizing Airbnb's system will only exacerbate the issues tenants across New York City -- many of whom live in some form of affordable housing -- already face. There must be measures maintained to protect their interests and limit their displacement.

Thank you for your time.

- Yonatan Tadele

NY City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings

Hearing on Illegal Hotels January 20th 2015

Testimony of Matthew Abuelo

Steering Committee, West side Neighborhood Alliance (WSNA)

Hello, my name is Matthew Abuelo and I'm a Steering Committee member of the community activist group, the West Side Neighborhood Alliance and a volunteer organizer who has worked against the malignant spread of illegal hotels throughout New York City for the past 10 years.

This scourge has been one of the reasons that we've lost 400,000 once rent regulated units occupied by working class New Yorkers. In 2010 those of us who worked on this issue really believed we had successfully beaten back this problem by working with our representatives to push legislation through Albany to strengthen the 1929 State multiple dwelling laws. Now we face an even more serious and perhaps insidious threat by outside groups such as Airbnb and the other operations which make up PEERS. Painting themselves as a supposedly populist company they seem to care little about violating the laws put in place to protect working rent regulated tenants from being harassed out of their homes or wish to maintain a quality of life which does not include dealing with tripping over tourists and their baggage.

Airbnb's CEO Brian Chesky has stated that he and the rest of the company are willing to work with public officials in order for the company to follow our housing regulations but since day one, they've done little more than thumb their noses at these laws. In fact the latest report of Attorney General Eric Schneiderman's office has shown that 75% of their operations are illegal, in that clients of Airbnb are subleasing their apartments out for less than thirty days and that the lease holders are nowhere on the premises. When this was brought to Airbnb's attention their only response has been to work harder to gut New State housing regulations for rent stabilized buildings, by pouring tens of thousands of dollars into upstate political coffers. If this is allowed to continue, our homeless problem which is already the worst it has been since the Great Depression will only get worse as currently protected tenants will be kicked out into the streets.

Furthermore Airbnb and others of their ilk purposefully misrepresent to their clients about the legality of subleasing in the city. Anyone who wants to rent a room in their apartment while the tenant is present is allowed to do so but only with the permission of the landlord. Renting out an entire apartment while the resident is absent is what violates the law and makes the Airbnb host open to being evicted by the landlord(s). In fact, separate from the multiple dwelling laws, landlords have always had the right to evict tenants who violate their leases by subleasing their units without permission. As for home owners, i.e. those who own their own houses, the multiple dwelling laws do not affect them one way or the other and they can rent rooms at their discretion with or without companies like Airbnb.

So in closing, please do not help these illegal hotel operators spread further into the city or all the progress we've made since 2007, when we started our campaign, will be for naught.

Thank you.

NY City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings

Hearing on Illegal Hotels January 20th 2015

Testimony of Vivian Riffelmacher

Steering Committee, West side Neighborhood Alliance (WSNA)

Over 10 years ago, in the spring of 2004, a new management took over the residential building where I lived on the upper west side and began running it as a commercial youth hostel. We quickly realized this was a way for management to make a lot of hard cash while making life miserable for the rent stabilized tenants. Our building rapidly became infested with backpackers coming to NYC to party - and bedbugs. As a result I began volunteering my time as a tenant leader and activist. This led me to the West Side Neighborhood Alliance (WSNA) - a neighborhood group which formed in Hell's Kitchen in 2007.

One of WSNA's central campaigns was battling the spread of transient rentals in residential housing. In the late 90's tourism had become a booming industry, tenants were being displaced and buildings - especially in Manhattan - were increasingly being cleared out and rented to tourists. WSNA petitioned for more stringent protections on residential housing and in 2010, our state electeds pushed through an amendment to the 1929 state multiple dwelling law.

Aside from the hellish conditions created in our building, safety was also a concern. One of the worst excesses we saw in our own building was dangerous overcrowding. Often groups of as many as 20 young people would stay in a room legally only big enough to be occupied by two people. The doors in our building - like many residential buildings - swung inward "against egress" as a space saving measure. Hotel doors swing "out" to allow rapid egress. Had there been a fire or similar emergency it was only too easy to imagine people getting crushed against a front door trying to get out. This was not an unusual situation - it was happening throughout the city. We saw one bedroom apartments being illegally partitioned off to make multiple bedrooms so as to accommodate more tourists.

We have been lucky enough to have public officers such as Gale Brewer and Christine Quinn on the City Council, Linda Rosenthal and Dick Gottfried in the State Assembly and Liz Krueger and Tom Duane in the state Senate. After the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement was funded to crack down on illegal hotels around the city, Gale Brewer got legislation passed on a city level to increase the fines on repeat offenders.

A lot of people worked very hard to make this all happen. It's distressing now, to once again, see so much hard work being undone by a companies from out of town (like Airbnb) eager to increase the value of their company by snaring the New York tourist market and pretending they are doing us a favor in the process. New York has more important things to do than waste our money creating new agencies to police the listings of a privately owned company which is well aware that its users are breaking the law.

Residential housing and commercial hotels need to be kept separate. Hard lines need to be drawn in order to save the little bit of residential housing we still have left and tourists need to stay in places specifically reserved for their use. I am hoping we can do this without having to barricade ourselves behind electric fences covered with razor wire and signs saying "tourists go home". Thank you.

Marina Metalios Testimony 1/20/15 AGAINST “AIR BnB”

I am a rent stabilized tenant living in my apartment for 25 years.

Air BnB’s enthusiastic promotion of predominantly illegal use of rent stabilized apartments is breath-taking. AG Eric Schneiderman’s report last October looked at 4 years of data and found nearly three-quarters of all Airbnb rentals in NYC are illegal (violating rent stabilization, zoning or other laws). This finding proves what those of us rent stabilized tenants have known since Air BnB blew into town. Since we saw our first out-of-place tourists in our hallways, we knew that our apartments were far more valuable as short-term rentals for vacationers than as long-term housing for US. Our NYC has an unspeakably tight housing market and Air BnB’s mostly unlawful use of apartments is making it even tighter.

Aren’t you feeling the squeeze?

AG Schneiderman’s report also found that the Air BnB hosts were dominated by large-scale operators. Not NYrs- just- getting- by- with- a- spare- room- to- let. But rather major commercial operators who together control more than a 1/3rd of all rentals and 1/3rd of all revenue generated. To wit: the report found that 6% of the hosts made 37% of the revenue (total \$168 million). That says “*ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching*” to Air BnB and “*adios adios adios*” to rent-stabilized YOU + ME.

I know that landlords and yes, even sometimes rent regulated tenants are in on the deal. I say throw the book at anyone—landlord or neighbor alike—who shacks up with Air BnB to illegally use rent stabilized apartments. All of them want to avoid regulation, avoid taxation, avoid fire and other safety codes, avoid liability! As a tenant in a completely regulated building, I reject the noise, the constant traffic and the compromised security that comes with an illegal hotel presence where I live.

If Air BnB wants to issue its IPO—rumored to be \$11 Billion with a “B” in value—let them do it when their business model does not feast on illegal use of rent stabilized apartments.

The Council should shut Air BnB down until then. \$11 Billion with a “B”. That \$11 Billion says “*ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching*” to Air BnB and “*adios adios adios*” to rent-stabilized YOU + ME. Thank you.

Testimony of Richard Amelius
New York City Council
Committee on Housing and Buildings
January 20, 2015

My name is Richard Amelius and I've been a permanent tenant of the Imperial Court on West 79th Street – a residential SRO building – since 2005, the same year I started my job as a kindergarten teacher five blocks away. When I moved in, my neighbors were respectful professional people and our building was quiet, clean, comfortable, and a safe place to call home.

It was quiet until a year long renovation gave way to a flood of tourists coming and going at all hours, having parties, and blasting music and television.

It was clean until they disrespected the public kitchens and bathrooms; began chain smoking on every floor; and left trash in the hallway attracting roaches and mice.

It was comfortable until elevators were monopolized by a parade of sightseers and take-out delivery people; until the laundry room was overrun by a dozen maids; and until the common areas became a place to host card games or fornicate.

It was safe before my neighbors were run out and replaced with a revolving cast of renters; before drug use forced management to put a lock on the bathroom door; and before I had to report prostitution to the doorman who was asleep in the lobby.

I have seen and lived through an amateur and dangerous renovation, several offensive office managers, and years of illegal, short term tenancies, all with the hope that one day the city's government would come to the rescue of its law-abiding constituents.

New York is where I live. I accept that I share the streets, subways, theatres, and restaurants with millions of residents and visitors. But Imperial Court is my home. I don't think I should be expected to share it with strangers. I am an honest, hardworking citizen who shouldn't have to sacrifice my peace, quiet, and safety so the landlord can make more money.



SHORT TERM RENTAL AND HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

My name is Michael, and I am here representing STRAHA, the Short Term Rental and Hospitality Association.

STRAHA is a small group of private brownstone owners, who live in our homes and wish to rent one or more units in our home on a short-term basis. Our members own their brownstones in various regions across the City: in Harlem, the East Village, and Brooklyn, to name a few. We believe that there is a real need for alternative short-term accommodation in New York, particularly in neighborhoods under-served or not served at all by hotels. Rather than destabilize these communities, our experience is that the right short term rental strengthens them. They allow family members from out of town to visit relatives and stay close by. Our small businesses contribute valuable economic and social strengths to our communities. They provide affordable temporary accommodations for New Yorkers affected by apartment renovations or difficult family issues, or for folks needing a place to stay for less than a month for work or for medical reasons.

And of course, our members' meticulously restored homes offer the localized and personal travel experience craved by visitors from around the world. But the tourism angle is only part of the story.

While the current conversation has centered on the idea of a shared economy, where every city resident is a sometime hotelier, what we have heard is the need for a more traditional, dedicated model. Since Bill A-10008 was passed in 2010, we have visited continuously with State Assembly Members and Senators in Albany, on both sides of the aisle, as well as with some New York City Council Members. We have heard very real concerns, but we have also generated substantial support for our specific business model. Rather than sharing, we understand that we are small businesses selling a unique service to our customers. We want to make sure that you hear and consider the merits of the amendment legislation that we at STRAHA currently propose.

We believe that an on-site homeowner who is dedicated 24/7 to their business, can best guarantee the safety and quality of life of all residents in their home. By requiring that potential homes be owner-occupied, we also limit the number of units any individual can ever rent short term. We believe in a simple registration and regulatory structure and payment of the same taxes as any hotel room. To further strengthen neighborhoods, the STRAHA proposal mandates that:

STRAHA

SHORT TERM RENTAL AND HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

- Any short-term units must be market rate, not rent stabilized or rent controlled.
- The brownstone be covered by full business owners liability and loss insurance.
- Fire evacuation diagrams be posted in all units.
- Approved brownstones be periodically inspected for safety.
- A homeowner may rent no more than 4 units on a short term basis.

Without doubt, tourism is the main driver of demand for rentals of less than 30 days, and an important potential source of tax revenue for the city. Media campaigns to date have focused largely on singles and couples, but STRAHA members tell us that the majority of their customers are families, possibly the most price and safety conscious of all tourists. Guests understand that, because our members live under the same roof, their safety is our full time job: 24/7, 365. I can tell you that this means a lot to them. Because we are dedicated businesses, they also express that it gives them confidence to know that the same unit will be available for return visits, or to recommend to other families with children.

While weighing the future of housing and tourism in this dynamic city we all love, we ask that you take a good look at the clear and manageable advantages of STRAHA's proposal. You may discover that we have already addressed many of your concerns.

AN ACT to amend the multiple dwelling law and the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to clarifying certain provisions relating to occupancy of class A multiple dwellings

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Paragraph a of subdivision 8 of section 4 of the multiple dwelling law is amended by adding a new subparagraph 3 to read as follows:

(3) In a class A multiple dwelling with a total of no more than ten units, the use of up to four apartments for occupancy of fewer than thirty consecutive days shall not be inconsistent with the occupancy of such multiple dwelling for permanent residence purposes if the owner of such multiple dwelling building is a permanent resident of a unit in the building and collects and remits all appropriate taxes and fees including, but not limited to, taxes and fees imposed by sections eleven hundred four, eleven hundred five, eleven hundred seven and eleven hundred nine of the tax law, and section 11-702 of the administrative code of the city of New York. The owner and apartment must also be registered with the city in accordance with regulations promulgated by the city, including holding a certificate of occupancy as is required under article one hundred eighteen of chapter one of title twenty eight of the administrative code of the City of New York. Such regulations shall provide for:

(1) safety protocols and procedures;

(2) an inspection and audit process for all registered apartments;

(3) sufficient insurance coverage;

(4) requirements for maintaining records of all guests;

(5) a registration fee of no more than five hundred dollars; and

(6) a public registry of all class A multiple dwelling units registered pursuant to this subparagraph so that the public is aware of those units on good standing.

§ 2. Subparagraph (a) of paragraph 8 of subdivision a of section 27-2004 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new clause 3 to read as follows:

(3) In a class A multiple dwelling with a total of no more than ten units, the use of up to four apartments for occupancy of fewer than thirty consecutive days shall not be inconsistent with the occupancy of such multiple dwelling for permanent residence purposes if the owner of such multiple dwelling building is a permanent resident of a unit in the building and collects and remits all appropriate taxes and fees including, but not limited to, taxes and fees imposed by sections eleven hundred four, eleven hundred five, eleven hundred seven and eleven hundred nine of the tax law, and section 11-702 of the administrative code of the city of New York. The owner and apartment must also be registered with the city in accordance with regulations promulgated by the city, including holding a certificate of occupancy as is required under article one hundred eighteen of chapter one of title twenty eight of the administrative code of the City of New York. Such regulations shall provide for:

(1) safety protocols and procedures;

(2) an inspection and audit process for all registered apartments;

(3) sufficient insurance coverage;

(4) requirements for maintaining records of all guests;

(5) a registration fee of no more than five hundred dollars; and

(6) a public registry of all class A multiple dwelling units registered pursuant to this subparagraph so that the public is aware of those units on good standing.

§ 3. This act shall take effect 120 days after it shall become law.

Testimony before the City Council Housing Committee,
January 20th, 2015 by Donald Matteson, Co-Chairman,
NYC B&B Association and Owner of At Home In Brooklyn,
B&B, Park Slope, Brooklyn

Good afternoon. My name is Donald Matteson. I own and operate At Home in Brooklyn Bed and Breakfast in Park Slope. I opened in Park Slope in 2008 to serve my neighbors and their families at a time when there were very few local lodging options for parents and grandparents coming to visit that did not involve a cab or subway ride to and from their loved ones. Now, most of the guests who stay with me can easily walk to their families' homes. Most of our guests are repeat customers and consider our home as their own home while they are in Brooklyn. Most I now consider friends. Their children and grandchildren know and love our home, a local landmark on Prospect Park West. I have attached many testimonials from them to my written testimony which I hope you will read.

I am also co-chair of the NYC B&B Association, a recently formed business group that promotes the understanding that Brooklyn's B&Bs are a vital part of the economic and social fabric of the communities we serve, and to distinguish what we do from short-term rental practices which some apartment owners, using AirBnB, engage in - - activities clearly illegal under New York's multifamily dwelling laws. America has a strong and proud tradition in the Bed & Breakfast industry, preserving landmark homes and providing guests with an alternative to hotels in underserved neighborhoods giving visitors a unique experience and close-up view of a diverse local culture.

There are laws in almost all major metropolitan areas of the nation, and in all the counties of New York State, providing a positive legal regulatory environment in which Bed & Breakfasts operate, providing a safe and unique service to many happy visitors -- except in the 5 counties of New York City.

Our economic contributions are not insignificant. On the contrary, our guests spend most of their time and money in Brooklyn's neighborhoods, eating, shopping and

visiting our local cultural institutions. B&B owners direct guests to the best that the neighborhoods have to offer in food, shops, destinations, tour guides and transportation. In turn, these guests spend hundreds of dollars daily at locally owned and operated businesses from Coney Island to Green Point.

A recent survey of B&Bs in Brooklyn shows that Brooklyn's Bed & Breakfasts host an estimated 45,000 guests per year, primarily in neighborhoods underserved by the hotel industry;

Our guests spend an estimated \$50,000,000 annually at local businesses. This money goes into the pockets of our neighbors, not to Wall Street.

Recognized by the Finance Department as a legitimate class of business, Brooklyn's B&Bs pay an average of \$15,000 annually in sales and use taxes, boosting locally generated tax revenues by nearly \$750,000.00 per year.

It is time that the City gave legal status to this thriving segment of small businesses, which are important to their neighborhoods, so that they can operate free from the fear that arcane and decades' old codes will be used

to fine us out of existence. That would be a great and unintended loss to this city. Thank you.

A Sampling of 25 Testimonials from Guests and Friends of B&Bs

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Deborah and I have been in the real estate business since 1977.

We have traveled to many states and countries, staying in many hotels, motels, B & B's (think England and Ireland) hostels, and camp sites.

Your "At Home in Brooklyn" is preferable to almost all the places we visited (there is an apartment in Rome overlooking the Roman Forum which cannot be beat).

Your rooms are immaculate, and the breakfast is the best spread ever (maybe except for the Castle in Ireland).

You and staff are warm and welcoming. Whenever we plan to visit NYC we first contact you for a room because your B & B is really very special.

And the cost you charge is worth the value your provide.

Please so advise NYC .

Angel Luis Franqui, Broker

SOLO REALTY COMPANY

2017 Chancellor Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-564-7656, ext. 16, Fax: 215-564-7893
WWW. SOLOREALTY.COM

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When regularly traveling for business from Bermuda to NYC, I stayed at a B&B in Brooklyn on several occasions. I was contemplating relocating back to the US at the time and wished to assess commute times, local amenities, etc. My decision to relocate to Brooklyn was informed by my gracious host and my experience during those visits. I am now happily contributing to the NY community and economy.

I believe B&Bs serve an important part in the mix of accommodations in NYC. They provide an intimate atmosphere and taste of local culture unobtainable elsewhere. I fully support legislation that enables their operation in NYC.

Best, John

John Flannery

VP Operations & Digital Strategy, Communications & Marketing

Phone: +1 212 915 6876

Mobile: +1 203 918 7151

jpflannery @jpflannery

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When I travel I like having the opportunity to stay at a B&B rather than a large commercial hotel. This was especially true when business recently took me to Brooklyn. I wanted to embed myself in a neighborhood. Bed and breakfasts are likely difficult for owners to manage, but they add so much to our American landscape and I hope they flourish always. The opportunity to stay in a quaint and private abode, the homemade breakfast, the comfortable rooms, the conversation

with the Inn keep, the insider tips and cozy, safe feeling that comes with being a “guest” in someone’s home.

I am glad that folks are willing to open their homes and give of themselves in this manner. It would be a shame if legislation prevented B&B’s from operating.

Candice C. Black, DO, FCAP

Associate Professor of Pathology

Pathology Residency Program Director

Cardiothoracic, Head, Neck, and Breast Pathology

Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center/Norris Cotton Cancer Center

The Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth

603 650 8217 |phone|

603 650 7214 |fax|

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We have travelled widely and frequently in the United States of America to places where you really meet the people. Don's B+B is the future for like-minded visitors to New York. Don't spoil it.

Yours sincerely

Len Brown and Jay Johnston

BBC Television

London UK



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Stephen R. Kempf • 35 Prospect Park West, Apt 8B • Brooklyn, NY 11215

To Whom It May Concern:

I live in the Park Slope neighborhood of Brooklyn, where I have frequently benefited from the presence of a private, home-based B&B just a few blocks (At Home in Brooklyn). Not only have I arranged for my parents and my sister-in-law to stay here when visiting out of town, but I have also enjoyed visiting the establishment for free community concerts and other such gatherings. It was at a Prospect Park Alliance event hosted at this B&B directly across from Prospect Park a few years ago that convinced me to become a partner at the Alliance – support that I have renewed every year since.

My parents have relished their stays at the B&B, both for the convenience of its location as well as its first class service. My parents are getting on in years, and there are no hotels located close enough such that they are able to walk back and forth to my apartment as they can from the neighborhood B&B. Furthermore, the owner provides a personal attention and local knowledge that they greatly value and they cannot find at the large hotels in Brooklyn.

I feel strongly that local businesses such as this B&B provide significant value to residents of my neighborhood – by providing a nearby place to stay for visiting relatives, by providing a space for events that strengthen our neighborhood and by providing a stimulus for our local economy. I support any legislation that will enable such B&B's to stay in business and continue to thrive. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further support.

Sincerely,

Stephen R. Kempf

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Dear Don,

We have had many wonderful stays at your B&B and would hate to see it close. Our daughter lives nearby in Brooklyn and, when we visit her, we love staying at your place. It is gracious and warm, unlike

hotels which can be cold and impersonal, and we love the delicious breakfast of fresh fruit, granola and croissants.

We wish you good luck in the upcoming discussions.

Thanks so much,

Carolyn and Arnold Gelderman

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My wife and I have stayed at "At Home in Brooklyn" and we look forward to many more times in the future. Don is a warm and personable innkeeper who has always made our stays with him enjoyable. One of the highlights has been meeting people from all over the world. The rooms are beautiful and very comfortable and we always feel at home. One feels like he/she is in a mansion

We really appreciate his efforts.

Thanks, Don

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To Whom it May Concern:

At Home in Brooklyn more than lives up to its name. When I visit my son who lives in Prospect Heights, this fabulous B and B allows me proximity to him, a feeling of neighborhood, and access to the owner's deep knowledge of the borough and the city. As a B and B, it is personal, friendly, and accommodating in ways that a hotel could never be. Its size affords me the comforts of a home visit, and makes visiting New York City all the more attractive. It also helps me to get to know the neighborhood near where my son lives, its little coffee bars, sandwich shops, green and flea markets. The location is perfect, with access to subway lines, Prospect Park, the Brooklyn Museum and Botanic Garden nearby. I have travelled into New York City for forty years, and this is by far the best way to stay that I have found. I wish I had discovered At Home in Brooklyn a lot sooner. It makes a world of difference.

Thank you,

Sally Sapienza
3420 Main St.
Barnstable, Ma. 02630

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Don Matteson, owner of At Home in Brooklyn has made visits to our son, Harry and his growing family in Park Slope pleasant and affordable. On one visit Harry brought his new-born daughter

there for us to baby-sit, while the new and exhausted parents had their first dinner out. Don and staff welcomed and indulged us new grandparents, adding their interest and care to make a very happy memory of the evening for our family. We have come to count on this home away, and strongly and hopefully support legislation that will allow us to continue the comfort and happy convenience of this and the other B&Bs in Brooklyn.

Sincerely,
Virginia and Harold Sheff
1259 Como Blvd West
St Paul, MN



To Whom It May Concern:

As frequent visitors to New York (our son lives in Park Slope), we have had occasion to consider and try a number of lodging options in the City. We have stayed in many hotels, and although there is nothing wrong with them, in our view, there is nothing to compare with the intimate and comfortable feeling that one gets from staying in a small B&B. We are tremendous fans of the local knowledge and personal service that one can only get from a B&B. This has been our experience in our travel throughout the U.S. as well as in our specific dealings with Don Matteson in connection with our stay in the "At Home In Brooklyn" bed and breakfast.

Our recent interactions with Mr. Matteson are a perfect example of the benefits of staying in a B&B. We booked his entire property for our extended family in connection with an upcoming wedding at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden. Having the whole property to ourselves will allow for a wonderful and unique family experience, which would not be available to us in a hotel. Also, Mr. Matteson has provided extremely useful suggestions regarding local events scheduled during our stay, restaurant options, and alternatives for brunch the morning after the wedding — all information which was not readily available to us from any other source.

Given our broad and very favorable experience in staying in B&B's in many states, I was surprised to learn that their legal status is in question in New York City. These properties provide a valuable alternative to chain hotels, which cannot replicate the individual attention, local knowledge and unique ambience that one gets in a smaller property operated by the owner him or herself. I would respectfully ask that you do whatever is necessary to allow these businesses to continue providing an indispensable lodging alternative to New York visitors.

Thank you very much for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Barry and Laurie Nagler
Needham, MA

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To Whom it May Concern:

I recently stayed 3 nights at the "At Home in Brooklyn" B&B on Prospect Park West. I was motivated to stay at this accommodation to experience, first hand, the feel of Brooklyn. I strongly believe that businesses like At Home in Brooklyn provide a unique experience and enhance the economic base in the communities they serve. While staying with At Home in Brooklyn we shopped and dined at the retail establishments on 7th and 5th avenues. The small business owners of your community ARE the neighborhood and need your support. Please support Councilman Cargegy's legislation.

Alyce.Langbein@yahoo.com

Chicago, IL

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My husband and I have stayed a number of times at various B & B's over the years in Brooklyn when visiting our daughter and her family-- who also live in Brooklyn. I can honestly say that if it were not for these welcoming, small places to stay, we would make our kids come to us!! No way would I pay hotel prices or opt for their impersonal-- read cold and generic-- atmosphere-- for a family visit. I think the B & B's serve a huge community service by offering warm, friendly and affordable places to stay. Want out-of-towners to come to you?? Make life easy for the B & B's who make life easy for those of us who want to visit NYC with a minimum of hassle. It's in your own best interest. Sincerely, Mary Singer (MarySinger@comcast.net)

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Friends and family have stayed at Don's B&B At Home in Brooklyn on a number of occasions and it has always been a wonderful experience. Sure, they could have stayed at a Holiday Inn over a half mile away but the experience wouldn't be half as good and it allowed everyone to stay

within walking distance. I truly believe innkeepers like Don are a real gift to NYC as he treats out of towners like family and offers great suggestions to make their visit the most fun it can be.

I'm fully in favor of new legislation to allow B&B's to operate legally in NYC. Frankly I'm surprised their legality could ever be called into question. The city needs as many ambassadors it can get and Don is truly one of the best.

Best,

Rob Cuthill



(Family visits regularly from Portland, OR)

To Whom It May Concern,

I have stayed at At Home In Brooklyn several times when visiting my son in NYC and have nothing but wonderful things to say about the accommodations, the owners, and the overall experience.. Before discovering this B and B, I stayed at a number of hotels and never had as positive an experience as I have had at At Home in Brooklyn. The owners make you feel comfortable, offer helpful suggestions about the area, and are professional in how they run their business and treat their guests. I support any legislation that will allow this B and B in particular, as well as others like it, to continue to provide their valued service to this area.

Sincerely,

Beth Kleederman
Maine

Here is one from Annie and I.

My wife and I lived in Brooklyn for several decades. Whenever we return to our neighborhood for a visit we feel there is only one place that makes us feel at home - The B&B around the corner from our previous home, "At Home". Although there are several hotels in Park Slope, not one of them holds a candle to the warmth, hospitality, ambiance, phenomenal breakfast, and central location offered by "At Home". The proprietor, Don Mattheson, couldn't be more friendly or accommodating. We strongly support the legalization of B&B's in New York City and frankly can't believe this is even an issue.

Marj Snyder and Ann Nottes

Marjorie Snyder, Ph.D.
Research Director
Women's Sports Foundation
718-974-7675
Marjsnyder2@aol.com

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To whom it may concern

At home in Brooklyn is a wonderful and unique B&B.
I have stayed and recommended it to many of my friends coming over from the UK.
This is an essential part of the urban fabric and unique diversity of NY and should be
wholeheartedly supported and encouraged.
If places like this were forced to close, New York would be a poorer place and lose some of the
threads that form the unique patchwork that is this city.
Please make life easier, not harder, for AHIB to flourish.
Best regards,
Alex

Alex Michaelis
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T: +442072211237
M: +447958492460
www.michaelisboyd.com
www.energyisland.com

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am a lifelong journalist and publisher who has spent the last twenty years writing purely about business travel. In this role I have travelled extensively around the globe, staying in many of the hotel industry's iconic properties. But when my husband and I travel to Brooklyn to visit our son and his family, we will always choose to stay at Don Matteson's B&B facing Prospect Park.

No one size ever fits all and for many a large chain property is the answer but for those of us who travel a lot on business and are consequently confident travellers who know what we want, places like Don's are a god-send – a home away from home within walking distance of our son's too-small-to-put-up-the-old-folks apartment in Brooklyn, a big place with little accommodation appropriate for transient visitors.

Don's place has everything you would want from WiFi to fabulous breakfast and it's small enough and run by people with sharp antennae who quickly work out what each guest is about and what makes them most comfortable.

I have been selfish and told only a trusted few of our friends and colleagues about this place because it is such a treasure, we don't want it overrun. But it is a treasure that we plan to go back to again and again.

Yours,

Betty Low

London



We discovered At Home in Brooklyn several years ago when our daughter moved to Brooklyn from Maine. This is a jewel of which Brooklyn should be proud. The accommodations are beautifully kept, the food is wonderful and its proximity to all of Brooklyn's major attractions make staying there something we look forward to. To the extent that laws need to be changed to preserve and protect this kind of amenity they should be. This kind of establishment shows off the best aspects of New York City. When our daughter got married in Prospect Park this is where we and our closest friends stayed Please do what you can to make sure establishment such as this stay in business.

Bill Robitzek

At Home in Brooklyn is really a “home away from home” in a big city. The place is a clean warm and beautiful venue where a traveler or visitor to Brooklyn can enjoy a peaceful and glorious setting. I am from Maryland was so fortunate to have found this residence to stay in when I came to care for my grand daughter and visit my family in Prospect Park. The owner is gracious and helpful and unlike a hotel or hostel, which are impersonal and often uncomfortable, a Bed and Breakfast serves to fill a great need in the Hospitality industry for those who are not on a business trip. The feeling of belonging in a neighborhood is very much in evidence in the wonderful place. It would be a shame if it were not available. I personally would give it a 5 star rating and a treasure in the community.

Barbara Sonies

To whom it may concern:

Since our daughter has moved to Brooklyn, we have visited and stayed in B&Bs in her neighborhood. At Home in Brooklyn has been our destination of choice because of the intimate setting and over time the good friends we've made in 10 years. In addition to the friendly atmosphere, we have been lucky enough to attend complimentary concerts with world class musicians.

There are clearly other destinations but I think we represent a significant demographic that prefers the B&B atmosphere to the larger hotel. Our B&B experience led us to purchase an apartment in Brooklyn.

B&Bs provide a valuable lodging experience and should be encouraged and supported.

Respectfully,

James H Ellison. MD

To NY City Council Housing Committee:

My wife Linda and I have been visiting NYC for the past 6 years to visit our son Paul and his wife Kate. We usually stay for several days in Brooklyn and have frequented both B&B's and traditional hotels. The B&B's we have frequented in Brooklyn have served our travel needs, better at times, than traditional hotels. I can't imagine why

B&B is perfect for this. It is clean, relaxing, friendly, and safe. It's also really nice to come in and see the same friendly faces of Don and his co-workers who all really feel like friends.

I have met other people staying at the B&B who are also well served by its existence. They include family members of people living in the neighborhood, whether a grandmother visiting her granddaughter who lives nearby, or parents visiting their daughter who lives in a tiny apartment not far, as well as a retired couple going to the Tribeca film festival, and recently I met someone who grew up in the neighborhood and was coming back to visit it. They are all nice people who want to be staying in a place that feels like a home away from home and is very convenient to where they need to be. So I have seen the B&B support families of people in the neighborhood-- so supporting the neighborhood really, as well as tourism and, as mentioned already, supporting people doing service for the neighborhood.

I hope this helps to add some perspective to the importance of having B&Bs in Brooklyn as well as reflecting my gratitude for them. If you have any questions of me, I give Don permission to give you my contact information.

Best regards,

Thea

Thea Hardigg
Northampton, MA

Please

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Two Written Testimonies from Brooklyn Residents in support
of owner-occupied Bed and Breakfasts in private homes
submitted to the City Council Housing and Buildings Committee, January 20th, 2015
by G. R. Steinfeld, owner/operator of The Blue Porch Bed and Breakfast
in Brooklyn and member of The New York City Bed and Breakfast Association

- Written Testimony of David M. Newman and Ellen B. Bilofsky, residents of West Midwood, Brooklyn

- Written Testimony of Lauren Volkmer, resident of Midwood, Brooklyn

Written testimony of David M. Newman and Ellen B. Bilofsky

We offer testimony in support of the enactment of sensible legislation to fairly regulate *owner-occupied* bed and breakfast establishments in New York City. We thank the members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings, and in particular its chair, Jumaane Williams, who is our councilperson, for holding this public hearing and for the opportunity to present testimony.

We do not own or have any financial stake in or business relationship with a bed and breakfast (B&B) or any other component of the hospitality industry. We are neither proponents nor opponents of B&Bs. We are, however, residents of a vibrant, welcoming, and stable community in West Midwood, Flatbush, Brooklyn, in which are located a number of B&Bs owned and run by our neighbors in their own homes. What matters to us is ensuring that our wonderful neighbors can remain in their homes and in our community. As a result of the recent and lingering economic crisis, among other factors, some of our neighbors must now rely upon the income generated by their B&Bs to pay their mortgages. Absent this source of financial support, their ability to keep their homes and remain in West Midwood might be jeopardized, along with the stability of our neighborhood.

Owner-occupied B&Bs in private houses that comply with fire codes, health and safety regulations, and tax and other requirements should not be equated with enterprises such as Air B&Bs, which in many cases are not in fact B&Bs, are not owner-occupied, may not be sited in private houses, may not comply with regulatory requirements, and may inconvenience or displace tenants.

The recent harassment and sting operations against compliant Brooklyn B&B owners by agents of the New York City Department of Buildings and reportedly by members of the New York City Police Department are uncalled for and shameful. Currently it appears

that the New York City Department of Finance and the New York City Department of Buildings have differing understandings of applicable B&B requirements. *[continued]* New York City needs a clear set of reasonable regulations that apply specifically to owner-occupied B&Bs so there can be no uncertainty about requirements, safety, and compliance. Such regulations would allow the city to continue to benefit from safe and inviting B&Bs that welcome tourists from around the country and around the world, while helping to maintain stable residential communities such as ours.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

David Newman and Ellen Bilofsky
37 Dekoven Court
Brooklyn NY 11230
718-859-5141
davenewman@optonline.net

Written Testimony of Lauren Volkmer:

To Whom It May Concern:

I have lived in Midwood for nearly 10 years and my husband was born and raised here. On two occasions my parents have come to visit and stayed in local, private home-based B&B's in Ditmas Park. On both occasions, my parents were immediately put at ease by the personal attention and intimate atmosphere of the B&B's. They live in a small town in North Carolina and are often uncomfortable with large, urban hotels. They were also impressed by the owners' knowledge of local history, local restaurants, shops, car services, etc.

I truly feel that these local businesses provide a valuable service for residents of this neighborhood who may have family or friends who want to stay close by and support the local economy. I know that given the opportunity, my family and I will continue to use their services for years to come. I support any legislation that will enable these B&B's to stay in business and continue to thrive. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further support.

Sincerely,
Lauren Volkmer
levolkmer@gmail.com

Testimony before the City Council Housing Committee, January 20th, 2015 by Elizabeth Mandarano, NYC B&B Association Member and Owner of Arlington Place Bed Stuy & Breakfast in Brooklyn

Good afternoon. My name is Elizabeth Mandarano, and I am a member of the New York City Bed & Breakfast Association (NYCBABA). I am also a proud fourth generation Brooklynite, and my son a fifth generation one.

In 2013, I purchased one of Bed Stuy's beautiful brownstones. Although the house was in poor condition due to the many challenges of maintaining such structures, its stunning original details remained intact.

With great respect for the house and its architectural history, I undertook what is amounting to a 2-year restoration process. To support this, I decided to operate it as an owner-occupied and hosted bed & breakfast, which is scheduled to open in June 2015. This plan allows me to share with our community and visitors a beautiful piece of the rich history of what's commonly referred to as "brownstone Brooklyn."

I wish to address bed & breakfasts' beneficial impact on tourism in New York City. Throughout the country and internationally, urban located owner-occupied B & Bs serve as well-established alternatives to larger, more expensive hotels that are most frequently clustered in only one or two communities within a city.

B & Bs are often situated in historic or landmarked homes that invite visitors to learn about our city's history and its varied neighborhoods as well as meet its community members. B & B owners remain on site, living in the home, and serve as the guests' host. B & B owners act as tour guides and historians.

B & B owners are dedicated members of their community who share knowledge of the city's attractions, food, music, cultural events and shopping so that a B & B guest can have an authentic and distinctive experience.

Tourism in New York City has increased over the last 10 years from 40 million to over 54 million annual visitors.¹ City hotel occupancy rates were 88% last year and continue to rise.² According to Sean Hennessey, CEO of the industry consulting firm Lodging Investment Advisors, corporate travelers tend to crowd out tourists who

¹ <http://www.nycgo.com/articles/nyc-statistics-page>

² <http://www.nycgo.com/articles/nyc-statistics-page>

cannot afford large hotel rates.³ Without the affordable traditional B & B option available to tourists, New York City stands to lose a significant amount of tourism, tax dollars, and an economic stream to its small businesses.

Owner-occupied B & Bs are an affordable, responsible, and safe alternative to the large hotel/motel experience. B & Bs allow out-of-state family members to be a guest in their loved ones' communities. B & Bs allow travelers to feel that they are in a home away from home.

Additionally, as for the outer-boroughs, their international appeal has grown significantly—we are no longer an afterthought but rather the specific destination of world travelers, many of who come from countries where B & Bs are very popular and seek their distinctive experience.

In essence, B & B owners serve as New York City's ambassadors. I hope that the Council will support their continued existence.

Thank you.

Elizabeth "Liz" Mandarano
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917 624-0213

³ <http://abcnews.go.com/Business/story?id=4008657>

TEMPO HOTEL TENANTS ASSOCIATION
(Formerly the Commander Hotel)
240 West 73rd Street, Apt. 920
(212) 787-1260, ext. 7920

Testimony of Anne Cunningham
New York City Council
Committee on Housing & Buildings
January 20, 2015

Good morning and thank you for letting me give my testimony regarding the detrimental effect of illegal hotels on people of New York City.

For the past 36 years, I have been an advocate and activist for tenants residing in SROs and residential Class A hotels.

In 1981, I moved into the residential Class A Tempo Hotel at 240 West 73rd Street in Manhattan, which had 200 rent-stabilized units at the time.

For years, residential Class A hotels like the Tempo, SROs, and thousands of other affordable housing units have been slowly disappearing from New York City's affordable housing stock because of landlords taking affordable units off of the market to rent them as illegal hotels.

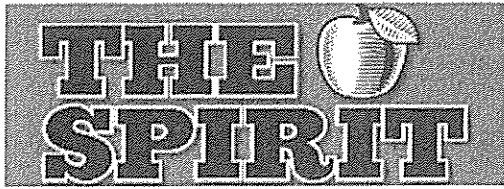
And now, there are websites like Airbnb and others that facilitate illegal hotel activity; speeding up the loss of our city's affordable housing.

When I first moved into the Tempo, the building was always filled with permanent tenants.

Then, in 2003, the landlord leased large numbers of the previously rent-stabilized units to a commercial hotel operator. During that time, tenants suffered deplorable living conditions, with repairs going unmade, drugs and prostitution in the building, and constant harassment by a landlord who sought to kick out long-term tenants in favor of tourists.

Websites like Airbnb will only lead to a repeat of what my neighbors and I experienced for years at the Tempo. For the sake of the residents of this city who depend on affordable, safe housing, I ask that you keep short-term rentals illegal and crack down on illegal hotel operators who are profiting at the expense of your neighbors.

Thank you for the pleasure of participation.



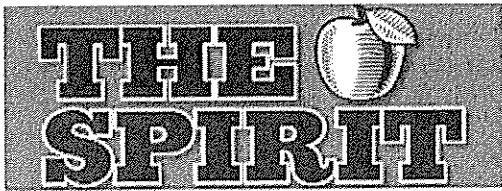
City Evicts Tourists From Illegal Hotel on UWS

MEGAN FINNEGAN BUNGEROTH, PUBLISHED APR 13, 2012 AT 6:01 AM (UPDATED NOV 21, 2014)



Earlier today, city officials came to the Tempo building at 240 West 73rd Street to give tourists the boot. A reported 89 rooms in the building have been operated as a hotel for years, alongside permanent residents, but a state law passed last year made them illegal. Mary DeGendre, a former New Yorker who now lives in Paris and was visiting with her husband and three teenaged daughters, had booked a suite at the Tempo for the week for \$2,000. When they arrived today after a 16-hour flight, they were told they could not check in and scrambled to find another place to stay at the last minute. "This was my Valentine's Day present from my husband," DeGendre said. "I'm a former New Yorker, I came here to visit, and I'm furious." The family trudged off to the Beacon, at a rate of \$360 a night. While visitors became the unwitting victims of a sudden eviction, permanent tenants of the building say they've been suffering for much longer and are the real victims of the situation that they hope will now improve. "There's people coming and going at all times, an unbelievable volume," said Stefan Capan, a real estate broker who has lived in the building, surrounded for the past six years by a revolving door of tourists, for 30 years. "The elevators are constantly breaking down. I have a different neighbor every day." Capan and his neighbors are hoping that this eviction will bring them some peace. Owners of the building, who are reportedly engaged in a legal battle with the company that has been operating the illegal hotel, were not immediately available for comment. City Council Member Gale Brewer and State Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal were both on the scene this afternoon, helping stranded tourists and talking to residents. "We hope this means that the rooms and apartments that are here become permanent housing for West Siders," Brewer said. She described many ongoing problems that residents have had living with transient guests, like all night partying and loud noises. "[They] should not have rented out rooms to unsuspecting tourists," said Rosenthal, who worked on the state law to make these hotels illegal. She said that she sympathizes with the stranded visitors but is happy that resident are finally getting some relief. "He's allowed the quiet enjoyment of his apartment," she said of Capan. "It's a threat to his safety, because they don't screen [guests] for criminal records. It's just untenable." Look for the full story in the April 19 edition of the West Side Spirit.

- See more at: <http://westsidespirit.com/city-evicts-tourists-from-illegal-hotel-on-uws/#sthash.YRXfKCPj.dpuf>



Tourists Evicted, Neighbors Relieved

MEGAN FINNEGAN BUNGEROTH, PUBLISHED APR 18, 2012 AT 6:01 AM (UPDATED NOV 21, 2014)

City closes hotel rooms in apartment building under new state law City marshals came to the Tempo building last Friday to give tourists the boot. A reported 89 rooms in the Upper West Side building have been operating as a hotel for years, alongside permanent residents, but a state law passed last year made them illegal. Officials say the hotel was flouting the law and enraging permanent residents, who say they're entitled to live next door to regular neighbors instead of a constant stream of budget travelers. Some of those tourists became the inadvertent casualties of the crackdown at 240 W. 73rd St. Mary DeGendre, a former New Yorker who now lives in Paris and was visiting with her husband and three teenaged daughters, had booked a suite at the Tempo for the week for \$2,000. When they arrived after a 16-hour flight on the day of the crackdown, they were told they could not check in and scrambled to find another place to stay at the last minute. "This was my Valentine's Day present from my husband," DeGendre said, standing with her daughters and their luggage on the sidewalk as they scrambled to find alternate accommodation. "I'm a former New Yorker, I came here to visit, and I'm furious." The family eventually trudged off to the Beacon at a rate of \$360 a night, adding more than \$500 to their expected expenses. While visitors became the unwitting victims of a sudden eviction, permanent tenants of the building say they've been suffering for much longer and are the real victims of the situation that they hope will now improve. "There's people coming and going at all times, an unbelievable volume," said Stefan Capan, a real estate broker who has lived in the building, surrounded for the past six years by a revolving door of tourists, for 30 years. "The elevators are constantly breaking down. I have a different neighbor every day." Capan and his neighbors are hoping that this eviction will bring them some peace. The building is owned by Aimco, a company that operates apartment buildings and residences around the country, and most of the units are for permanent tenants. Eighty-nine units in the building, however, are rented to a company called Woogo, which has been operating a hotel out of the building under the name Woogo?Central Park. This kind of commingled hotel operation within a permanent residential building was the target of the state law, which was passed in an effort to return these small apartment-like rooms back into affordable housing units. Representatives at Woogo did not respond to requests for comment, but it still appears possible to make reservations for the hotel through popular sites like Trip Advisor and Orbitz. A studio room rents for over \$200 on a weekend night?still a bargain compared to other hotels in the neighborhood. City Council Member Gale Brewer and State Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal were both on the scene April 13, helping stranded tourists and talking to residents. "We hope this means that the rooms and apartments that are here become permanent housing for West Siders," Brewer said. She described many ongoing problems that residents have had living with transient guests, like all-night partying and loud noises. "[They] should not have rented out rooms to unsuspecting tourists," said Rosenthal, who worked on the hotel law. She said she sympathizes with the stranded visitors but is happy that residents are finally getting some relief. "He's allowed the quiet enjoyment of his apartment," she said of Capan. "It's a threat to his safety, because they don't screen [guests] for criminal records. It's just untenable."

- See more at: <http://westsidespirit.com/tourists-evicted-neighbors-relieved/#sthash.fbRaJAYi.dpuf>

TEMPO HOTEL TENANTS ASSOCIATION

(Formerly The Commander Hotel)

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Anne Cunningham, Director

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TOURIST TRAPS

Testimony of Anne Cunningham On Illegal Hotels

Before Erik Martin-Dilan, Chairperson
Housing and Buildings Committee
New York City Council

December 3, 2007



Testimony before the City Council Housing Committee, January 20th, 2015, by Monique Greenwood, Owner of Akwaaba Mansion B&B (Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn) & Co-Chair of NYC B&B Association

My name is Monique Greenwood. I make eggs, I make beds and I make memories as the owner and innkeeper of Akwaaba Mansion Bed & Breakfast in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. Twenty years ago, my husband and I purchased and saved a dilapidated, single-family mansion and began raising our family and hosting B&B guests—20 years ago. In preparation for our venture, I stayed at countless B&Bs on the east coast and learned what a B&B is and what it is not. Now I'm considered an expert in the industry, one who has served on the national board for the Professional Association of Innkeepers' International, serves as co-chair of the newly formed NYC Bed and Breakfast Association, and one who was named New York City Small Business of the Year by two mayors, Giuliani and Bloomberg.

So, for the purpose of this hearing, let me first shed some light on what a bed and breakfast is. It is technically a short-term accommodation, which is why I and my B&B colleagues are here to testify today. But that's where the similarities end between our small, home-based businesses and the un-hosted apartment vacation rentals and illegal hotels that have caused concern for so many.

A traditional B&B--like the ones we own and operate--is typically:

1. **A one or two-family, owner-occupied home.** Our guests stay "with" us, and we don't deplete any of the city's much-needed affordable housing stock. Nor do we inconvenience or pose a safety threat to other tenants in a building, because we are the only other occupants of our homes.
2. **A safe, properly insured lodging alternative.** Our B&Bs carry insurance policies specific to our industry. They require we have commercial-grade fire extinguishers and emergency lighting, while practicing several preventative safety measures.
3. **A fiscally responsible business paying all city and state taxes.** About 10 years ago, several traditional B&B owners met with the Department of Finance, which recognizes our legitimacy. Finance created a classification called Small Operators, and we collect City and State Sales Taxes, as well as Hotel Taxes, Room Taxes and Occupancy Taxes, totaling 16% of the cost of a stay.
4. **An openly operated and marketed business with high visibility and respect in our communities.** We are not anonymous. We are valuable community members, often housing our neighbors' families and actively involved in preserving the quality of life throughout our blocks.

- 5. A necessary and desired component of New York City's successful tourism industry.** Manhattan has always been a hot tourist destination and now Brooklyn neighborhoods and other outer-borough areas have sizzle too, but they have few or no hotels. What they do have is us—local residents who welcome travelers into our homes, which are some of the city's finest and most historic dwellings. We are professionals who take what we do seriously. We receive guests with open arms and warm muffins. We tidy their rooms and point them in the right direction to enjoy all this fine city has to offer.

So what's the problem?

The treatment of B&Bs in New York City has been uneven, each city agency trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, making the operating climate difficult at best for consumers and business owners alike. Of the 62 counties in New York State, 57 have regulations dealing specifically with the definition and operation of Bed and Breakfasts. The five counties of New York City are the only ones with no such regulation. Because the Buildings Department has no classification for B&Bs, it appears the only provision for a similar operation is an archaic 1960s building code granting owners of one- or two-family homes the right to host two "boarders" who pay for that consideration. Enforcement has been intermittent – until recently when it became harsh – and the current interpretation of the code makes the outlook for traditional B&Bs bleak.

Measures must be taken to preserve the Bed and Breakfast segment of the hospitality industry in New York City. Our members welcome the opportunity to work with lawmakers to craft sensible, smart regulations. I know it doesn't have to be a daunting task. I also own a B&B in my birth town of Washington, DC, an urban city where B&Bs are celebrated, not just tolerated. I've included how they handle this industry in my written testimony. Thank you for your attention and your anticipated positive action.

Monique Greenwood
Owner & CEO (Chief Enjoyment Officer)
Akwaaba Bed & Breakfast Inns
347 MacDonough St., Brooklyn, NY 11233
718-455-5958
www.akwaaba.com email: info@akwaaba.com

Akwaaba Mansion Bed & Breakfast
347 MacDonough St.
Brooklyn, NY 11233

Owners: Monique Greenwood and Glenn Pogue

When we purchased the dilapidated “haunted house” on Bed Stuy’s MacDonough Street in 1995 with hopes of making it our home and a luxury bed and breakfast, people looked at us as if we had three eyes. We do. The third eye is the eye of vision—the ability to see the possibility.

Now, nearly 20 years later, a restored Akwaaba Mansion has been the home where we’ve raised our daughter, played host to countless numbers of guests, and helped transform a community in the process. We love welcoming those visiting friends and family in the neighborhood, offering high-touch hospitality to high-pressured local folks looking to get away without going away, and serving as ambassadors to tourists from across the globe, all of whom gain an immediate appreciation for our neighborhood’s beautiful brownstones and beautiful brown people.

Over the past 12 years, Akwaaba Mansion has also been the springboard for a host of locally-owned businesses opening down the street on Lewis Avenue. We personally invested in a block of retail storefronts and attracted tenants that have operated upscale eateries, coffee shops, book stores and gift shops. This conscious community-building effort has added to the quality of life for Bedford Stuyvesant residents, and these small businesses have benefited greatly from the patronage of guests frequenting the B&B.

With Akwaaba Mansion in Brooklyn as our home base, we have been fortunate enough to expand our hospitality reach to save historic properties and open similar B&Bs in Washington, DC; Cape May, NJ; New Orleans, LA; and The Poconos in PA, employing close to a dozen residents and hopefully inspiring many more along the way.

Monique is CEO (Chief Enjoyment Officer) of Akwaaba and has been hailed by the Professional Association of Innkeepers International (PAII) as one the top 10 influential individuals in the innkeeping industry. She has served on the boards of PAII, the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Bridge Street Development Corporation, The Weeksville Society and Community Board 3. Named as Small Business of the Year by both the Giuliani and the Bloomberg administrations, Akwaaba Mansion stands as a beacon of what’s possible when passion meets purpose and persistence.

Akwaaba Mansion Timeline of Successes and DOB Violations

1860—Single-family, 5,000-square-foot Italianate structure is built

1995—The mansion is saved from neglect and ruin when purchased and restored by Monique Greenwood for use as her home and as a four-guest-room Bed & Breakfast

July 1995—Akwaaba opens to rave reviews and a plethora of positive media attention for the B&B and the Bedford-Stuyvesant community

January 1997—Prompted by the complaint of a single neighbor, NYC Buildings Dept. issues an ECB violation for occupancy contrary to C of O

March 1997—Violation dismissed in an ECB Hearing

1998—Akwaaba's Monique Greenwood receives Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation's Outstanding Community Leadership Award and is named "Woman of the Year" by the Brooklyn NAACP

2001—Mayor Giuliani presents Akwaaba Mansion and Monique Greenwood with its Outstanding Business Achievement Award at Gracie Mansion

2010—Almost a decade later, Mayor Bloomberg invites Greenwood back to Gracie Mansion to receive the Brooklyn Small Business of the Year Award

2010-2012—Akwaaba Mansion and Monique Greenwood receive Proclamations for Business Success and Community Building from countless elected officials, including now Public Advocate Tish James, former Congressman Edolphus Towns and State Assemblywoman Velmanette Montgomery

January 2010-present—Monique Greenwood serves on the Board of Directors for three significant organizations: Professional Association of Innkeepers International; the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce; and Brooklyn Community Board 3

January 2012—NY Women's Foundation presents its 25th Anniversary Spirit of Entrepreneurship Award to Monique Greenwood

January 2011-January 2014—Akwaaba Mansion wins Trip Advisors' "Five-Star" Certificate of Excellence Award for four straight years

January 2014—After 18 years of operating, NYC Buildings Dept. issues Akwaaba an ECB violation for occupancy contrary to C of O, the same violation issued and dismissed in 1997. Once again, the violation is dismissed, but the fear, sense of harassment and uncertainty for the future are ever present.

NOTE: See attached *More* magazine article documenting this timeline.

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She listened to her inner voice

Monique Greenwood's publishing career seemed perfect, but she dreamed of running a B&B. Now she owns four

BY ANDREA ATKINS



>> Greenwood, shown in her Brooklyn B&B, which she bought for \$225,000 in 1994. Her four inns are now valued at \$9 million.

It's a rainy November morning, and a pale winter light is slanting into the dining room of the Akwaaba Mansion Bed and Breakfast in Stuyvesant Heights, Brooklyn. The black walnut table is pristine; two gleaming white lilies arc from a glass vase at its center. At 8:15, Monique Greenwood, Akwaaba's owner, sweeps in and starts to set up for breakfast. First come round place mats, followed by sparkling silverware and maroon damask napkins that she slips into gold metal rings, each bearing a small likeness of an African mask. Next, a tiny pitcher of cream for each place setting, a sugar bowl every two plates and little silver pitchers of maple syrup.

At 9, when guests begin to wander in, Greenwood, 54, produces platters laden with plump challah French toast, fresh fruit and turkey bacon—a feast she whipped up in 20 minutes. She gives one guest directions to Brooklyn's Barclays Center and offers another the names of Manhattan stores selling stylish maternity clothes. Greenwood owns two other Akwaaba inns (akwaaba.com)—one in Cape May,

New Jersey, and another in Washington, D.C.—as well as a boutique resort in Bethany, Pennsylvania. But, she says, “I’m probably a closet social worker. I want the best for people, and I know that little things make a big difference.”

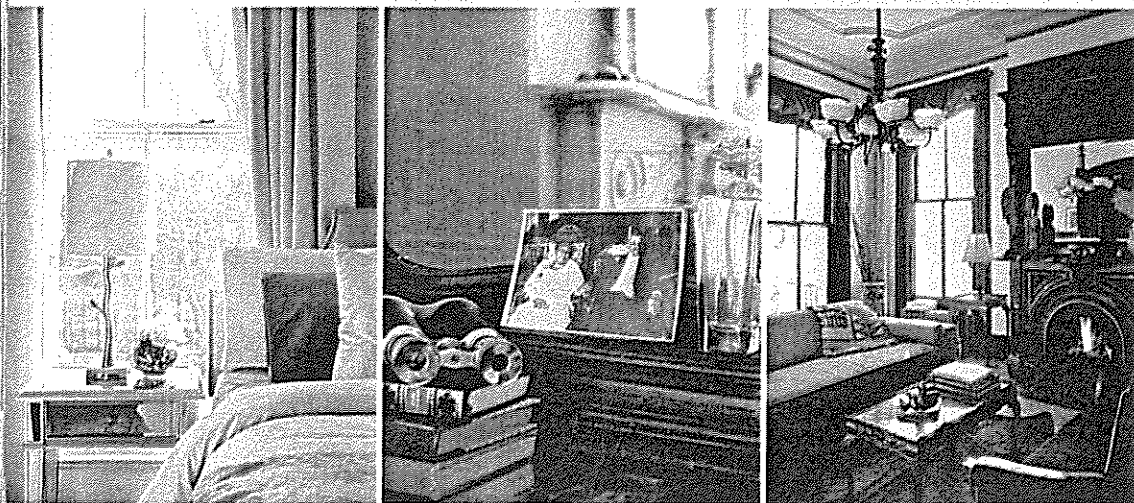
❶ **Indeed, it was** her habit of noticing the little things that set Greenwood on her path to reinvention. In 1993, on the way home from her editor-in-chief job at a children’s trade magazine, she spotted a wedding party posing for photographs in her Brooklyn neighborhood—and behind them, two decidedly unpicturesque garbage cans. She moved the cans, and as she took in the scene, she was struck by the run-down mansion across the street. Suddenly, she imagined living there. Maybe the owners would sell it to her, she thought. She and her husband, Glenn Pogue, a television broadcast engineer, and their then baby girl, Glynn, could occupy the top

to leave a message. Meanwhile, she and her husband delved into B&B research, staying at more than 30 around the country and taking notes on what they liked. Greenwood signed up for an innkeeping course and checked with the local buildings department; there were no regulations governing B&Bs.

Finally, after 18 months, she discovered that the mansion’s owner had died and that the heir who was executor of the estate hadn’t responded to her notes (or those left by dozens of other interested buyers) because he was overwhelmed by the prospect of selling his mother’s house. Greenwood persisted, and he eventually accepted her offer. “He believed I would bring the property back to a state that his mother would be proud of,” she says. She bought the 18-room, 5,000-square-foot house for \$225,000, financing it with a 10 percent down payment and a \$202,500 loan under the Community Reinvestment Act, a federal law that

pulled up carpeting and linoleum to reveal original parquet floors. They restored fireplaces and marble mantelpieces. They redid the kitchen, the bathrooms and all the wiring. They bartered with tradesmen: Greenwood promised the plumber he could have his wedding reception at Akwaaba in exchange for installing pipes and faucets. The final price tag for all the work? Five hundred thousand dollars. “We’d always lived below our means,” says Greenwood, so going without vacations and expensive clothing didn’t faze her.

❷ **By late** spring 1995, the work almost complete, Greenwood was ready to announce her plans for the Akwaaba Mansion B&B at the monthly block association meeting. Speaking to about 50 residents gathered in the living room of a nearby home, she gave a PowerPoint presentation with pictures of the restoration and outlined the positive impact she believed it would have on



The interior of Akwaaba Mansion in Brooklyn. Greenwood loves meeting new people and decorating her B&Bs. But she doesn’t know how to cook. “The only meal I can make is breakfast,” she says.

floor, and she’d convert the rest of the house into a B&B. Greenwood quickly wrote a note asking the owner to contact her and slipped it under the door.

She got no response. A week later, Greenwood slipped another note under the door—and got no response to that either. Determined that the home would one day be hers, she returned every week

encourages banks to lend to businesses in low- and moderate-income areas. Greenwood, still working full time at her publishing job, moved her family into the house in December 1994 and named her venture Akwaaba, a Ghanaian word that means “welcome.”

Evenings and weekends, she and Pogue worked on renovations. They

the neighborhood. “I had been to many B&Bs as a guest and knew that the owners were viewed as pillars of their communities,” she says. “I just assumed that would be my experience.” But at the end of her presentation, the room was quiet. The meeting, which had begun with congenial chatter and warmth, took on a different tone. Suddenly, a

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SHE LISTENED TO
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man who lived across the street from Greenwood slammed his fist on a table and shouted, "I will fight you with every penny I have!" He viewed Akwaaba as a hotel, a commercial enterprise that did not belong there.

Believing she was operating in accordance with local regulations, Greenwood opened Akwaaba for business on the July Fourth weekend that year. Soon after, the irate neighbor began photographing guests as they entered and left the inn. When a local TV station did a story on Akwaaba, he showed up with protest signs. False rumors circulated that Greenwood and Pogue were selling drugs or running a brothel. Greenwood did her best to prove that regulations for hotels did not apply to Akwaaba, but 19 months later, in February 1997, the buildings department ordered Greenwood to shutter Akwaaba on the grounds that it violated zoning laws.

Greenwood felt utterly defeated. All she could do was cancel upcoming reservations. But over the next few months, people she had never met showed up on her doorstep to say they supported the B&B. "I just wanted you to know that I am so sorry about what is happening," one woman told her. "We think a B&B is a good idea." At the grocery, at the hardware store, on the sidewalk, people stopped Greenwood to express support.

Encouraged, Greenwood, Pogue and several neighbors circulated a petition among local businesses. "Save Our Bed and Breakfast," it urged. The pastor of a nearby church invited Greenwood to attend a service and speak to the congregation. "We've got a friend in the pews," he told them. "She needs help to keep her business alive. Come on up here, Sister Greenwood."

Still stung by the nasty rumors, Greenwood spoke from the heart. "Nothing will be happening in my house that doesn't happen in yours," she said. "I know it's important for a community to be economically viable. Other communities have B&Bs; why not ours? This is my dream. Don't let it be a dream deferred."

Running the numbers

82

Number of challah loaves Greenwood buys every month to make French toast at all her inns

32

Number of countries represented in Akwaaba's four guest books

\$1.4 million

Cost of renovating the Mansion at Noble Lane, Greenwood's Pennsylvania boutique resort

190

Number of guest reviews contributing to Akwaaba Mansion's five-star rating on TripAdvisor.com

The pastor then passed petitions with the collection plate. "That day re-energized me," says Greenwood. Soon she and Pogue had gathered a total of about 1,500 signatures. After reading a newspaper story about the controversy, a New York City architect familiar with the building code called Greenwood to offer his services—gratis. With his help, Greenwood was able to prove that Akwaaba wasn't a hotel and that she had the right to offer lodging for up to four paying guests. It reopened three months after being shut down.

During all the turmoil, Greenwood's publishing career had skyrocketed. She'd joined *Essence* as style director and quickly rose to executive editor. Akwaaba was merely "a side hustle," as she puts it. She handled bookings via phone calls in the evenings and took in guests only on weekends. But as the Internet grew, the rooms began filling up on weekdays as well. She hired a neighbor to handle reservations.

For her 40th birthday, in 1999, Greenwood went to Cape May for

a week to decompress. Her life had become a whirlwind of magazine deadlines and real estate concerns (by then, the couple had also bought two commercial buildings in Brooklyn). As Greenwood relaxed on the beach, she felt the tension melt from her body. "I had my head to the sun and my toes in the sand," she remembers. "Then I heard a voice say, 'It's time to change your life.' I was like, 'What?' 'You have to quit your job,' the voice said. It was so strong, this voice, that I couldn't deny it. It was my voice. I felt like I'd had an epiphany."

» **Back in** New York, Greenwood prepared to turn in her resignation. But her boss promptly promoted her to editor-in-chief. Greenwood didn't feel she could refuse. "I worked my whole life to have this," she says. She threw herself into her new role. But the gnawing sense that her life was off-track didn't go away.

Two years later, again while vacationing in Cape May, Greenwood had another aha moment. As she lay on the beach, with seagulls cawing overhead and waves lapping the sand, Greenwood began to think about what kind of legacy she wanted to pass on to her daughter: I can leave her the bed-and-breakfast. I can leave her a real estate portfolio. I can't leave her a job at a magazine.

In July 2001 she left the magazine for good, and a year later she opened Akwaaba by the Sea, in Cape May. In 2003 she leveraged her holdings to buy an existing B&B in Washington, D.C., her hometown. With the help of search engines and travel sites like TripAdvisor.com, her B&Bs thrived. Guests from one Akwaaba often tried another. "What distinguishes our inns is our excellent service," she says. "When it snowed this winter, we got up before our guests and cleaned off their cars. We offer forget-me-not trays with toothbrushes, razors, anything else you might have forgotten. We respect the historical nature of our homes but also have rain showerheads and Jacuzzis."

Greenwood made her largest purchase, the F.W. Woolworth mansion in Bethany, Pennsylvania, in 2010. From the moment she saw this 25,000-square-foot manor on 22 acres, she envisioned a health and wellness retreat, but she quickly realized she'd need help to make it happen. "My pockets weren't deep enough," she says. Greenwood was accepted into Goldman Sachs's 10,000 Small Businesses program, an initiative designed to help entrepreneurs grow their companies, create jobs and get loans and business support. For two months she spent every weekend taking classes; she learned business forecasting and developed an operating plan. She was also accepted into the Clinton Foundation's Entrepreneur Mentoring Program, which paired her with an adviser at the consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton. "The experience was amazing and something I never would have been able to afford," she says. "He helped me prepare the financials, and I got a \$500,000 Small Business Administration loan at 2 percent interest, which is just unbelievable, and a \$1.2 million loan from a local bank." She opened her Pennsylvania retreat in May 2012.

» **This past** year, Akwaaba's gross revenues hit the million-dollar mark. Greenwood is debt free, aside from her mortgages, which she says represent 25 percent of the combined value of her properties—about \$9 million. Although she doesn't draw a regular salary, she says her income is in the low six figures. Best of all, she can live in her four homes as the seasons and her moods change. "Innkeeping really speaks to all my personal passions: entertaining, decorating and creating a financial legacy for the next generation," she says. "Mostly, though, the biggest payoff of being an entrepreneur is the sense of freedom and the idea that you can create your own destiny." *

ANDREA ATKINS is a freelance writer based in Rye, New York.

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January 14, 2015

Re: Washington DC Bed and Breakfast Regulations

To whom it may concern,

My name is Steve Lucas, owner of Bed and Breakfast Accommodations, Washington DC, a reservation service representing 14 Bed and Breakfasts in the city. We have been working as a B&B reservation service since 1984. The 14 properties range in size from 1 to 8 rooms. Regulations for license of B&Bs in Washington were developed in the late 1980s or very early 1990s. The former owner of this reservation service worked closely with the city to develop the regulations. Here are the highlights:

- Owners are licensed as a home occupation
- Owners may have 2 rooms as a matter of right
- Owners may have 4 rooms with special exception
- Owners in a Historic District whose homes are deemed a contributor to that destination may have up to 6 rooms (this provision was instrumental in preserving larger, historic homes as single-family dwellings)
- Owners in a specific zone (ie R5) may have up to 8 rooms with special exception.
- No B&B is permitted in any rental building or property
- No B&B is permitted in any condominium building
- No B&B is permitted in any mixed use building

B&Bs larger than 8 rooms can be licensed as Inns and only in specific zoned areas of the city. The regulations have worked well for the city over the 30 plus years. Bed and Breakfasts have preserved several large, historic properties and been instrumental as enhancements and gentrification of neighborhoods. The Bed and Breakfast industry has a long history as part of the accommodations industry. Here in Washington, we believe we have a very successful B&B industry that contributes positively to the city financially while meeting the needs of visitors looking for alternatives to the traditional hotel experience.

Sincerely,

Steven Lucas
Bed and Breakfast Accommodations
877-893-3323
steve@bedandbreakfastdc.com
www.bedandbreakfastdc.com

**Oversight: Short Term Rentals – Stimulating the Economy or
Destabilizing Neighborhoods?
Testimony before the City Council Housing & Buildings Committee**

Rugby Gardens B&B
317 Rugby Road
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11226
(718) 469-2244 • rugbygardens@gmail.com
Sue Fishkin & Michael Hurwitz - Hosts

In the Fall of 2006, my husband Michael Hurwitz and I opened Rugby Gardens B&B in our home on Rugby Road in the Beverley Square West section of Ditmas Park, Brooklyn. A beautiful Victorian home built by the turn-of-the-century developer, T.B. Ackerson in 1900, and lovingly painted and restored its beautiful clapboard and shingle exterior, Rugby Gardens B&B has become the icon of the popular Ditmas Park neighborhoods.

Taking advantage of 2 empty bedrooms on our third floor, and using my skills as an Interior Stylist and Feng Shui Practitioner, I went to work re-designing each room into a comfortable guest space, while Michael, an attorney, took care of all the start-up needs like setting up an account with the city and state to register our business, calculate collect and pay B&B taxes, and initiating Innkeepers Insurance. At the time, we saw Rugby Gardens as additional income making it possible to keep the house in good repair as well as expand our own lives. You must be prepared to “Marry” an old house.

In December 2008, as a very successful Sales Rep for Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt Education working alongside NYC Dept of Ed Schools, I lost my job and as a result half of our family income, which included our health insurance and a company car. Like millions of others across the country, we despaired about whether we would be able to keep our family home and what the consequences of all of our financial losses would be so Rugby Gardens became the crucial source of income needed to support our family of 5. We were able to purchase health insurance as a small business that, while expensive was manageable and necessary, and after 18 months, when we started to feel more financially stable, went on to purchase a car.

I am very thankful for the health insurance as in 2012, I was diagnosed with Lymphoma, and a short year later, in 2013 Cancer of the Appendix. I really don't know what we would have done without it. In addition, The income from the B&B subsidized my inability to work in my design business as I recovered giving us more financial stability.

In addition, our original motivation in starting up in 2006 became a financial lifeline in 2008.

Of course nothing lasts forever in a home built in 1900, so over the last number of years we have re-roofed, re-plumbed, re-electrified, and re-furnaced – all paid in large part with the income from our B&B.

Over the years we have hosted guests from all over the country and the world – parents coming to see their children, grandchildren, those attending weddings, graduations and other

events, tourists, and sometimes even locals – like writers – who just need a quiet creative space to get away and think. Often, there are repeat guests who have become friends over the years. People choose to stay at Rugby Gardens because it is affordable and friendly. It is a way for foreigners to have an authentic experience when staying in a local neighborhood with a local family. Just steps from the restaurants, bars and other services reinvigorating Cortelyou Road, guests have great resources at their fingertips and contribute to the growth and sustainability of these businesses.

Guests love the B&B so much, that their unsolicited reviews on www.tripadvisor.com **have ranked Rugby Gardens #7 out of 56 B&Bs in Brooklyn!**

(see a few of our guest reviews in the attached document)

Friends of Cortelyou

Friends of Cortelyou, in the Ditmas Park section of Brooklyn, was started 13 years ago by Jan Rosenberg, a sociology professor turned local real estate broker, to spark the revitalization of Cortelyou and the surrounding neighborhoods.

One by one, small boutique restaurants and businesses began springing up, as young families, artists and musicians, filmmakers and entrepreneurs have moved to the neighborhood, and little by little this beautiful enclave of free-standing Victorian homes has become rejuvenated.

Another industry driving this rebirth is the small owner owned and operated B&Bs that are sprinkled throughout the various neighborhoods that comprise the larger Ditmas Park--- Beverley Square West, West Midwood and Kensington to name a few. Their guests support the restaurants and bars, real estate brokers, food coop and supermarket, all of the small coffee houses, Brooklyn Industries, boutiques and other small businesses that are coming to this area.

The owner owned and occupied B&Bs are the "Ambassadors" of our neighborhoods as well as greater Brooklyn, whether they provide a sanctuary for grandparents from out of town, offer an opportunity for a family who might be re-locating to feel what it's like to immerse themselves in this warm and vibrant community, or host tourists from across the world. They have helped to put us on the greater map - create our "Brand". If you Google Ditmas Park, the first photo you will see is one of our beautiful B&B homes -- the icon of Ditmas Park.

The specific type of short-term rental that is provided by the owner owned and occupied B&Bs have helped to further stimulate and stabilize our local community and economy.

Jan Rosenberg


jan@brooklynhearth.com; 347-446-9688

Founder & President, Friends of Cortelyou

Founder, Brooklyn Hearth Realty

Rugby Gardens Bed & Breakfast
317 Rugby Road
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11226
718.469.2244 • RugbyGardens@gmail.com
<https://sites.google.com/site/rugbygardens>
Sue Fishkin & Michael Hurwitz, Hosts

In 2006, we started Rugby Gardens B&B in our home in the Ditmas Park Section of Brooklyn. We barely let the word out and we were welcoming our first guests for 15 days from Australia. Since then, Rugby Gardens enjoys a great reputation due in large part to our beautiful, comfortable and conveniently located accommodations, and over 150 unsolicited happy reviews on Trip Advisor. We don't even advertise and our home has become the "Icon" of this great neighborhood.

We immediately registered our business with the State. We collect and pay our taxes to the State and City. As there aren't any NYC B&B standards, we looked to the State and the requirements of our Innkeepers Insurance plan to determine what we should do for safety as well as to maintain standards of excellence in our business. As such we provide a daily self-serve breakfast, provide daily housekeeping, smoke & carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, egress via our third floor fire escape as prescribed by our Innkeepers Insurance Policy, etc. At this juncture we have received 3 complaints from the DOB-

November 7, 2007 Complaint # 3244458 Category 4a Disposition XX
October 1, 2013 Complaint# 3460967 Category 45 Disposition 12
February 19, 2014 Complaint# 3470314 Category 5F Disposition 13
All of which have "REF" Status.

We were first visited by 3 "Firemen" who did not have badges, but were wearing sweatshirts with NYFD Logos. They said that if we didn't let them in we would be in violation and fined. We let them in and they went all through the house and didn't say anything.

Next, we were visited by a gentleman who identified himself as a building inspector, when asked for ID, he did show his credentials, and asked to see the basement stating we were issued a complaint for illegal conversion. He immediately saw there wasn't an illegal conversion and apologized for the disruption.

About a month and a half later, we were visited by 4 men in police uniforms. Our son opened the door and called me down. At that time I was recovering from 3 cancer surgeries and asked if they had a warrant. They said no, so I said no to letting them in. They were rather insistent and somewhat threatening as they refused to leave, threatened violations and kept pressing to come in. I finally went to the door myself and said that without a warrant they could not enter.

When we started our B&B in 2006 we thought it would be helpful financially as our 3 children were in different phases of college. In December of 2008, I lost my job, and our car, which had been provided by my employer for 8 years. We became dependent on the income from the B&B in a very different way, and didn't replace the car for more than 16 months, as we were worried that we might not be able to hold on to our home. Being in my mid 50's at that point, and Michael his mid 60's we were very concerned about our financial future and the future of our long-standing family home. Things were so tough for our extended family that we also took on the burden of offering shelter to one of my siblings for 3 years.

In 2012, Michael fell, broke his knee and was unable to work at his legal practice for 3 months and that May I received a diagnosis of Lymphoma and had a major surgery. A short year later I was diagnosed with cancer of the appendix requiring 2 more surgeries. This prevented me from pursuing my design business, which has suffered. All of the tensions surrounding the DOB Complaints and the various inspectors randomly showing up at our door have created a very scary and troubling experience for our home as well as our guests.

We rely on the income we make from our B&B to help support our family. We live in the house – we are Owner Owned and Occupied. We provide a much needed

service to those living in the neighborhood who need a place for visitors to stay, help support the local businesses on Cortelyou Road, pay our taxes and help to support our community and the city at large. We are Ambassadors of Brooklyn, the arts, our marvelous transportation system – you name it we contribute to it.

If Owner Owned and Occupied B&Bs who pay taxes and carry Innkeeper Insurance at very high rates are lumped in with the AirBnB populace it seems completely unfair. If we are forced to close our doors we may also be forced to leave the city we grew up in and where we chose to stay and raise our family.

VISIT ROCHESTER WEBSITE <http://www.visitrochester.com/hotels/>

Sleep

Sweet Dreams

Hotels, inns, B & B's and motels: we have the places you'll want to stay! The area offers a plethora of fine lodging to accommodate any taste. If you appreciate a little luxury, hotel rooms and suites, with all the amenities including a great view, are worth the trip alone. If you are looking for the cozy charm of a bed and breakfast, Rochester offers friendly local lodging tucked into quaint city neighborhoods or delightful countryside locales. For longer stays, a range of residential hotels and executive apartments make visits of weeks or months a real pleasure. And in this kid-friendly community, there are always plenty of budget-conscious options for families.

[Click here](#) for a complete list of special offers & great deals!

A Staycation in Ditmas Park: Rugby Gardens B&B

The iconic Victorian home serves as one of Ditmas Park's many bed and breakfasts

Posted by [Caitlin Nolan](#) , June 09, 2012 at 04:32 PM

<http://ditmaspark.patch.com/groups/summer/p/a-staycation-in-ditmas-park-rugby-gardens-b-b> -

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<http://ditmaspark.patch.com/groups/summer/p/a-staycation-in-ditmas-park-rugby-gardens-b-b>

[More](#)



If you've ever spent time in Ditmas Park, chances are you recognize [Rugby Gardens](#), an iconically colorful Victorian home on Rugby Road. But did you know that the home serves as one of the neighborhood's many bed and breakfasts?

"It's a comfortable place to stay while traveling," said Sue Fishkin, owner of Rugby Gardens. "We have a lot of people coming to visit their kids at Pratt, Brooklyn College and NYU, and Europeans, Aussies and New Zealanders who like a quiet place."

Fishkin and her husband Michael Hurwitz opened their home as a B & B six years ago and haven't looked back since. "We have friends in the neighborhood who had been doing it for a while," she said.

The pair converted two bedrooms on their third floor to guest rooms when their eldest son and daughter moved out. "There's direct access to the third floor, and guests share a bathroom," Fishkin said.

"We totally redecorated the rooms. Each bedroom has a flatscreen television, DVD player and in the hall is a library of DVDs."

Guests are able to borrow the many New York travel books Fishkin makes available, as well as consult the guide of local restaurants in each bedroom.

In the morning, guests can take advantage of the continental breakfast prepared by Fishkin, who goes to great lengths to ensure each guest is comfortable with the food available.

"We try to accommodate everyone if they have special needs," she said.

"You want people to have what they want."

Trip Advisor Reviews for Rugby Gardens B&B
(Unsolicited)

ron781

Macungie, Pennsylvania

I review

"Rugby Gardens - a wonderful b&b in Brooklyn"

Reviewed November 18, 2014

We thoroughly enjoyed our stay at Rugby Gardens this past weekend. Rugby Gardens provides clean and comfortable accommodations in a quaint Brooklyn neighborhood, and we appreciated the warm hospitality of Michael, Sue and Max. Our daughter moved to Brooklyn last summer. We chose Rugby Gardens because it is close to her apartment. It was nice to be able to walk just a few blocks to our room each night. We will certainly recommend Rugby Gardens to our friends, and we are looking forward to returning sometime soon.

- Stayed November 2014, traveled with family

Jesper H

Copenhagen Region, Denmark

I review

"Victorian B&B in Brooklyn"

Reviewed November 18, 2014

I stayed with my parents for a week in september at Rugby Gardens. Sue and Michael are very friendly and helpfull. Sue printed several ticket brought online for us and we often talked in the morning when having breakfast. Rugby Gardens is a lovely wooden house and have two rooms on the second floor with a shared bath (i think in US it is regarded as third floor). My parents are in the seventies and had no troubles climbing the stairs. The rooms and bathroom are clean and cosy. After a long day of walking around New York we enjoyed bringing take away food back to enjoy on the veranda and afterwards relax in the rooms with a book or watching a video on the tv. There is a selection of dvd's to select from, which my farther enjoyed very much. There is also free wifi. The breakfast is plentyfull with yoghurt, fruit, bread, juice etc. The neighborhood is charming and just around the corner is supermarkets and restaurants. We loved to travel with the subway right around the corner each day into Manhattan together with the New Yorkers. And loved to return to a warm house with character in the evening instead of an anonymously hotel. For us it was a great deal of the experience to stay at Rugby Gardens and can only recommend it if you want to add something extra to your visit in New York. Written by Jesper from Denmark

- Stayed September 2014, traveled with family

ValerieHull
Canberra, Australia
2 reviews

1 helpful vote

"More a home than a B&B"

Reviewed November 13, 2014

In recent years we have spent an inordinate amount of time in hotels in Asia and America. The routines are familiar, and generally we find places good enough. Thus we were delighted to find this little gem of a home stay in the heart of Brooklyn. Sue and Michael are very caring hosts, and struck the perfect balance between helpfully introducing the neighbourhood and giving the space and privacy that one needs to really rest. The breakfasts were delicious. The guest rooms are on the third floor and share a bathroom, but that did not pose any problem. The entire space of the room and bath has been well maintained, while keeping the feeling of old Brooklyn. We would definitely come back.

Room Tip: Front room was larger -- see the website for info

See more room tips

- Stayed October 2014, traveled as a couple

Gayla Yates Gordon
Santa Rosa, California, United States
Reviewer

"Victorian/ Deco/ Asian Delight"

Reviewed September 8, 2014

We recently spent three days in Brooklyn, at the lovely Rugby Gardens B&B. This 1900 Victorian has been remodeled and decorated in a fabulous, quirky, creative way, blending an abundance of family heirlooms with Art Deco and Asian influences. Owner, Sue Fishkin, is an Artist and professional Designer (Rooms About You) with impeccable taste. She, with husband, Michael Hurwitz provide hospitality galore. It's on a quiet, tree lined, residential street, yet, just around the corner from an exotic Tibetan restaurant and the subway station to Manhattan. The two rooms and bath are on the third floor, but, we found the climb well worth the effort. In fact, we can't recommend Rugby Gardens highly enough. We loved every minute of being there, so, It gets 5 stars from us!

"Another great visit"

Reviewed September 2, 2014

Spent another Labor Day weekend at Rugby Gardens B&B, our favorite place to stay in NYC. A quiet, well-kept neighborhood with plenty of on-street parking; easy access to all of the city via the Q train, just a block away; comfortable rooms with all the amenities (we especially appreciated the air conditioning over this hot weekend; a marvelously

maintained turn-of-the-century house; and breakfasts to die for. There was nothing not to like!

Room Tip: Front room is a little larger and looks out over the (quiet!) street. Rear room is a little smaller...

See more room tips

- Stayed August 2014, traveled with family

inbrooklyn
brooklyn, ny
Reviewer
["Terrific"](#)

Reviewed July 20, 2014

This place is a wonderful find.

The rate simple can't be beat and the accommodations are quite simply first rate.

I read one of the previous reviewers and I'm sure we must have stayed in different places.

The place is immaculate. The bathroom locked worked just fine. the breakfast is an awesome continental spread.

The area - ditmas park - one of the most charming and special neighborhoods of New York City - a real gem with some of the best resteraunts in this city. (Subway less than 5 minutes away - manhattan about a half -hour.

Would have no hesitation staying at this lovely place again

- Stayed June 2014, traveled solo

StardocJG
Glenwood, Maryland
Senior Reviewer
["Our Go-To Accommodations in Brooklyn"](#)

Reviewed July 17, 2014

Wow - Have no idea what adele h's problem is! Rugby Gardens is our home away from home when we visit Brooklyn to see our niece. We just completed a quick 2-night stay, but we've stayed at Rugby Gardens more than 5 times for up to a week. Sue & Mike are delightful hosts, our room and the rest of the house are pleasantly decorated and clean (I'm a neat freak), and the breakfast is tasty and fresh. If you're looking for a sterile Marriott experience, Rugby Gardens is not for you. However, if you're seeking the comforts of home in a relaxed, friendly setting, This B&B is perfect. Stayed July 2014

nenims

Exeter, United Kingdom

Top Contributor

"Amazing find in New York"

Reviewed July 11, 2014

Just had a wonderful 3 night stay @ this homely Bed + Breakfast, a short distance from the Q subway in Brooklyn. Great breakfasts, relaxing atmosphere, comfy beds and friendly hosts. This all made for a very good stay in the Big Apple. Recommend eating in Manhattan rather than locally or @ the other end of the subway is Coney Island where dinner on Brighton beach and then a walk down to the fairgrounds made a good evening's entertainment.

Room Tip: We had both rooms on the top floor of the house, shared bathroom. I faced the garden, other the str...

See more room tips

- Stayed July 2014, traveled with family

Jan S

Evanston, Illinois

2 reviews

"Brooklyn first-timer"

Reviewed June 22, 2014

After many years of visiting Manhattan, I was visiting Brooklyn for the first time to spend time with my 20-something son who'd moved there. I am so happy that I chose Rugby Gardens. It was an ideal location for my visit. I loved everything about it. Everything others have said about the charm and comfort of the house and guest rooms is right on ... but in addition to that the neighborhood feels very sweet, relaxing and safe (important for woman traveling alone). Hard to say what was best about it, though the gleaming bathroom with new shower and skylight was close to the top. No negatives. None. Hope I'll be able to come back soon, this time with husband.

Stayed June 2014, traveled solo

Meyerbc

Stockton, California

1 review

1 helpful vote

"Location worked well for us and we enjoyed our hosts very much."

Reviewed October 30, 2013 [via mobile](#)

The hosts were gracious and allowed us to arrive early and store our luggage . Breakfast is lovely and plentiful. The room is fun, a bit on the eclectic, funky side, but comfortable and clean. Good value, especially for New York City .

- Stayed October 2013

- 497MaryH
- Lichfield, United Kingdom
- 1 review
- ["Sanctuary in the City"](#)
- Reviewed September 28, 2013
- My youngest son (aged 26) booked our accommodation for a three-day trip to New York City from 9-12 September 2013, but kept it a secret until we arrived on the doorstep of Rugby Gardens B and B in Brooklyn - what an absolute treat! We'd arrived in sweltering heat with too much luggage that we'd optimistically dragged by public transport from Newark Airport. Palpable relief came when we turned into the lovely tree-lined avenue that is Rugby Road, and stopped outside #317. The delightfully painted exterior was soon equally matched by the warm welcome from Sue, and the comfortable, colourful mindfully decorated interior of this unique residence. Our room was equipped with all that we needed for creature comfort, and there was a newly renovated shower room across the landing/hallway. Breakfast was generous with delicious fresh bread, cereals, fruit, yoghurt, the option of eggs, and a wide range of teas. Our hosts were particularly patient and helpful with advice about visiting downtown NYC. Nearby Cortelyou Road had a wide range of places to eat, a convenient subway station, and the sights and sounds of a friendly neighbourhood getting on with life. We loved Rugby Gardens, and happily recommend it to any visitor to NYC. We chose a taxi from a local company to convey us back to Newark Airport (\$80 fare)...!

Attack of the Bed & Breakfasts

The View From Argyle Heights by Homeowner Harry (Another in a series of observations about life in West Midwood as it is lived today...or maybe not)



There are now 11 Bed & Breakfasts in Victorian Flatbush and eight of them are in West Midwood (see list). I like to think that's due to the refreshing winds that blow aloft up here in Argyle Heights, since we are a staggering 38 feet above sea level. But it might also have to do with how delightful it is in our neck of the woods, and the entrepreneurial spirit of our citizens. After all, West Midwoodians are descended from a hearty stock, many of whom wandered down the passes of Prospect Park looking for a better life and detached garages.

But B&B's are a fairly recent phenomenon in our Flatbush environs. They started to spring up almost at the same time that hotels spread from Downtown into Brownstone Brooklyn and now there are at least seven chain hotels stretching from the Brooklyn Bridge to the South Slope. However, for the traveler on a budget, or those visiting family nearby, or those who prefer the peace and quiet and warmth of a friendly host, the B&Bs fill an important gap. For instance, my brother-in-law visits his daughter and three grandchildren on Argyle Road quite often and to avoid being underfoot, especially when it's time to wash the dishes, or to grab some extra sleep after a long drive, what could be more convenient than renting a room for two nights around the corner?



Well enough about my theories. Let's hear what the innkeepers have to say. I asked each of them to share with us their experiences but as usual I waited until the last second to reach out and just when I thought I'd identified the absolute last B&B out there, another entity would rise up from some far flung corner of the Web as if to mock my crumby due diligence. Still I managed to convince a majority of these gallant souls to trust that I would not turn this article into a reminiscence about my favorite breakfasts over the years, although to be honest, that was basically my first draft, which Laura Givner gently rejected with the suggestion: "More people, less biscuits."

Let's start with Susan Lehrer, who opened her Dekoven Suites back in 2002 to stave off the financial doom of two steep college tuitions. Many of her colleagues upon first contemplating taking the leap themselves (prompted by empty nests or crushing mortgages), cited Susan's enthusiasm, innovation, and willingness to help as a major factor in following her into B&B Land.



Opening a B&B takes a lot of effort. There is a ton of insurance required, a steep 14.75% tax and other fees are collected by THE MAN, and the work is ceaseless, since those continental breakfasts and fresh sheets just don't appear magically each morning. By the way, just to work in one breakfast tidbit, Jorin and Alexandra Reddish, who just opened The Isabella on Rugby

Road, pointed out to me why continental breakfasts (combos of cereal/pastry/fruit/bread/coffee/juices) are the staple of B&Bs: the insurance will not permit *cooking* meals for guests. So that explains why you'll never find any omelet addicts wandering our streets.

And as for the legality of turning one's house into a B&B, THE MAN appears to have taken a very sensible stance: as long as it's not a multiple dwelling, coop or condo, and the establishment does not create a nuisance (e.g., by booking members of the Tea Party and the Socialist Workers' Party in adjoining rooms), maintains proper insurance and ponies up the taxes and fees, then there is no issue. Susan cited Carolyn Greer with the Brooklyn Tourism office at Borough Hall as a big supporter – she even brings a group of European tour operators through our neighborhoods each year under the theory that seeing is believing. Indeed, looking at the houses that serve as B&Bs in these parts, it would be hard to find better maintained properties – picture post-cards, one and all. Add to that the wonderful hospitality and warm personalities of the hosts, and frankly, considering the far-flung ports of call for the visitors they serve, these B&Bs probably do more to promote Brooklyn tourism than any Madison Avenue campaign ever could (although Don Draper in his prime might have nailed it).



Western Europe appears to contribute the most foreign bookings -- UK, Scotland, The Isle of Man, Ireland, Germany, France, Italy, Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Holland were all mentioned (by the way, Bibi and Harry Kisoensing of Bibi's Garden speak Dutch) -- but visitors from China, Russia, Japan, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, Israel and Yemen were also cited as contributing to our local economy, as many innkeepers mentioned the boost local businesses receive

from their guests, particularly the many new eateries along our commercial strips.

And as for why all these out-of-towners are here gobbling croissants each morning, Rob Seidel of The Lorelei estimates about a third of his guests are visiting family members, and Trudy Steinfeld at The Blue Porch points out that those relatives reside not only in West Midwood, Ditmas Park, Beverly Square West, Fiske Terrace, and Kensington, but in areas farther north, like Park Slope, Williamsburg, and Fort Green. Others are here on business that can range from promoting a book, as one recent guest from Nashville told Sue Fishkin and Michael Hurwitz at Rugby Gardens, to researching a novel set in 1970's Brooklyn after checking in to Donna Zaengle's Emilia's Retreat. While the rich and famous apparently still prefer the Hamptons and the Waldorf Astoria, Victorian Flatbush attracts more of the creative crowd. Rob Seidel hosted the editor of a leading rock music Internet zine; Susan Lehrer welcomed the first trombonist with the Melbourne Philharmonic; Jorin Reddish recently had a record producer from Germany; and Trudy and Paul Steinfeld have booked journalists, computer scientists, medical professionals, and even one rocket scientist.



Some of the odder reasons for overnight stays included a Manhattanite who told Sue Fishkin he was going to interview for an important job the next day and absolutely, positively had to have a quiet place for the night to settle his nerves! The most improbable guests were three sailors from Amsterdam who planned to pilot their flat bottom boat around New York Harbor in June 2009 to commemorate Henry Hudson's discovery 400 years earlier. Arriving at JFK without reservations, they piled into a cab and asked the driver to take them to a hotel, whereupon they found themselves staring at some dump in the Bronx. To the rescue came a little thing called the Internet, where the sailors found Emilia's Retreat. Susan Lehrer organized an effort by the local B&Bs a few years back to get themselves listed in one place and <http://www.victorianbb.net/> was the result. They can also be found, along with other newcomers on <http://www.bedandbreakfast.com/>. Perusing these sites and the individual web pages each of the B&Bs have created or simply Googling their names brings up links to a lot of fantastic reviews on TripAdvisor.com and other travel boards.

Anyway, when their craft was late in arriving from Holland, the sailors stayed an extra two weeks thanks to Dekoven Suites squeezing them in, demonstrating another important feature of these businesses: they are able to cross-refer to other nearby B&Bs when they are booked up. The guests from Holland, led by an intrepid gal named Ingrid, were so grateful for West Midwood's hospitality that they took their hosts on what Donna calls "the most amazing sunset sail around the harbor". Ingrid has since returned to Dekoven Court, sans boat, with family in tow and photos of subsequent journeys by the Dutch adventurers show up regularly in the mailbox of Emilia's Retreat.



Asked to recount favorite memories, it was apparent these entrepreneurs are all well-matched to be in a people business. Susan Lehrer recalled how the Christmas Blizzard of 2010 enthralled a French family who had never seen snow before. Susan outfitted the kids with snow gear and lo and behold, they all returned in the Spring for a second vacation in West Midwood. What Rob Seidel and Lance Tukell cited as most rewarding was “being part of people’s important events and experiences – from weddings to funerals to births.” Sue Fishkin and Michael Hurwitz put it this way: “Our guests all leave an imprint of one kind or another and you have to open your arms and embrace all of them.”

The Coney Island Cyclones (both the roller coaster and baseball variety), Shakespeare in the Park, Fashion Week, 4th of July Fireworks in the Brooklyn Bridge Park – these are among the many New York experiences to which our innkeepers have introduced their out-of-towners. But to really crystallize the difference between a stay at the Brooklyn Marriott and a Victorian B&B, consider that when guests from England wanted to know what a typical American Thanksgiving Dinner was like, they were welcomed by three generations of Zaengles, 30 strong, for their 39th consecutive observance. And finally, Donna recently took a 9 year old

German girl trick or treating for the first time in her life down Glenwood Road. Nothing like starting at the pinnacle of the Halloween experience – the West Midwood Parade.

Series: [New York city guide](#)

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New York city guide



10 of the best B&Bs in New York

HotelChatter.com editor **Juliana Shallcross** selects the top 10 B&Bs in New York

• [As featured in our New York city guide](#)

Juliana Shallcross

-
- [The Guardian](#), Thursday 5 May 2011



Brown period ... Lafayette House is a brownstone in the Bowery, New York
Lafayette House

Practically a secret hotel that never advertises and never appears on booking sites, the Lafayette House on East 4th Street in the Bowery doesn't even have signage except for a small nameplate next to the door. The low-key vibe continues inside the converted brownstones' 15 rooms and suites with a serious-looking antique furnishings, working fireplaces and white-tiled bathrooms. It's run by the same people behind the lively Bowery Hotel just a

few blocks away, but the Lafayette House doesn't have a restaurant or bar or even a front desk.

• 38 E. 4th Street, +1 212 505 8100, lafayettenyc.com. Queen rooms start at \$295 a night

Abingdon Guest House



Named for the Abingdon Square Park in the popular Greenwich Village neighbourhood, the Abingdon Guest House offers a quiet alternative to the party hotels in the nearby Meatpacking District. Spread over two landmark townhouses from the 1850s, the nine rooms have distinctly different decor from the bold-coloured Ambassador room to the English country Windsor room. All have their own bathroom and several have exposed brick walls. There's daily maid service and free WiFi, but you are on your own as far as food. Fortunately, good restaurants are never scarce in the village.

• 13 8th Avenue, +1 212 243 5384, abingdonguesthouse.com. Rooms from \$159

Akwaaba Mansion



For having only four guestrooms, the Akwaaba Mansion in Stuyvesant Heights sure covers a lot of ground. Run by husband and wife, Glenn Pogue and Monique Greenwood, the B&B has tastefully done themed rooms like the Black Memorabilia room which is filled with collectibles and the Ashante room which displays African artifacts. All rooms have private baths and some even have jaccuzzis. Another rarity for a B&B in New York is the large, enclosed sunporch and secluded garden.

• 347 MacDonough Street, +1 718 455 5958 akwaaba.com/brooklyn. Rates start at \$170 a night and includes a Southern breakfast and afternoon tea and refreshments

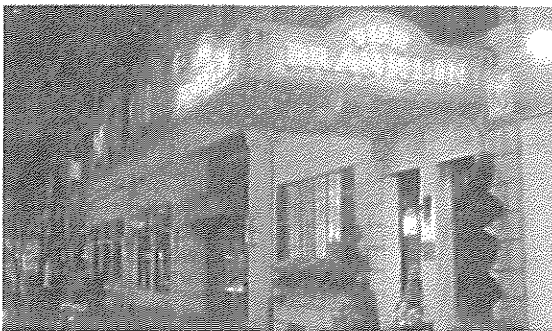
Rugby Gardens



No matter how bad you are with directions, you can't miss the Rugby Gardens, a three-story Victorian home with a color-blocked exterior of mustard yellow, brick red and aqua blue. Located on a tree-lined street in Brooklyn's Ditmas Park, the B&B has just two guestrooms and one shared bathroom but can accommodate up to five guests. The owners, Sue Fishkin & Michael Hurwitz, encourage guests to take their shoes off and offer a basket of slippers next to the stairs to ensure that you do.

• 317 Rugby Road, +1 718 469 2244, [website](#). Rates start at \$150 a night. Continental breakfast is included but there's a two-night minimum

Franklin Hotel



If the show "Gossip Girl" has you curious about life on the Upper East Side, spend a few days at the Franklin Hotel for a complete immersion. The hotel's location on East 87th Street puts it just a few blocks from Central Park, the Guggenheim, and the designer shops on Madison Avenue. The 50 guestrooms look much like the apartments inhabited by UES residents with their soft color schemes and pretty lighting. Bvlgari toiletries, Frette bathrobes and access to the New York Sports Club are some of the amenities offered.

- 164 East 87th Street, +1 212 369 1000, franklinhotel.com. Rates start at \$299 a night and include a European-style breakfast

Harlem Flophouse



True, the services are limited and the rooms are cheap for Manhattan, but the Harlem Flophouse on West 123rd street is nothing to be scared of. Set inside a renovated prewar building, the B&B has four bedrooms that pay homage to jazz greats like Thelonious Monk and the writer Chester Himes. There are two shared bathrooms but each has its own antique clawfoot tub. Nearby are jazz clubs The Lenox Lounge and Minton's as well as the Studio Museum of Harlem which specializes in African art.

- 242 West 123rd Street, +1 347 632 1960, harlemflophouse.com. Rooms start at \$100 for a single, breakfast is not included

Stay the Night



In the heart of the Upper East Side's Carnegie Hill neighborhood on 93rd Street, Stay the Night has seven rooms to accommodate various traveler needs. There are two small standard guestrooms with queen beds and shared baths, a one-bedroom apartment with a full kitchen and four Victorian suites with private bathrooms. The Central Park Reservoir is close by as is the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum.

- 18 East 93rd Street, +1 212 722 8300, staythenight.com. Rooms start at \$75 for the guestroom but the Fox Suite which has a little deck overlooking the private garden outback goes for just \$215

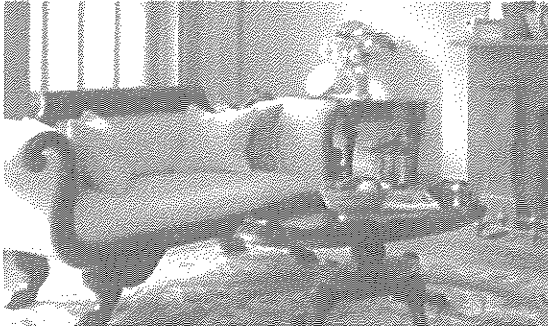
1871 House



Just off Park Avenue on East 62nd Street is the 1871 House, a five-story townhouse with eight rooms that range from a studio with a kitchenette to a three-bedroom suite. The decor is a hodgepodge of French country, Victorian and Americana but the high ceilings, wood floors and working fireplaces are nice homey touches. The location is what really wins out here as you are close to the best of both the Upper East Side and midtown. If you want to explore further, the 59th Street station on Lexington is just three blocks away.

• 130 East 62nd Street, +1 212 756 8823, 1871house.com. Rates range from \$225 to \$445 a night

Inn at Irving Place



If Edith Wharton ever needed a place to stay in modern day New York City, she might feel right at home at the Inn at Irving Place in Gramercy Park. Two classic brownstones were combined to create 12 guestrooms and residences but remnants of the original architecture remain like the Victorian staircase leading to the guestrooms. Rooms are heavy on "period furnishings" yet they are meticulously cared for. The restaurants, shops and bars of Union Square are a few clicks away and the Inn has its own tea salon, Lady Mendls, and lounge, Cibar.

• 56 Irving Place, +1 212 533 4600, innatirving.com. Rooms start at \$325 a night

Harbor House Bed and Breakfast

The best views of Manhattan can often be found off the island, like the views from the Harbour House on Staten Island. The 11-room B&B prides itself on its location in the New York Harbour with each room description denoting the type of view it has such a city, Statue of Liberty or Verranzo Bridge.) The accommodations are a bit dated with floral rugs and floral bedspreads but it could be worth the photos to show the folks at home.

• *1 Hylan Boulevard, +1 718 876 0056, nyharborhouse.com. Rates start at \$79 for a room with bunk beds and a shared bath to \$150 a night for The Staten Suite*

• **Juliana Shallcross is editor of HotelChatter.com**

<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/brooklyn>

Brooklyn's upscale inns offer places for a relative or a local escape

BY [Denise Romano](#)

Monday, July 21, 2008, 4:20 PM

Showalter for News Lorelei Bed and Breakfast in Ditmas Park.

<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/brooklyn/brooklyn-upscale-inns-offer-places-relative-local-escape-article-1.349271>

Bed and breakfasts are no longer only found tucked away in quaint little towns. The inns are popping up all over [Brooklyn](#). For out-of-town guests or for a stay-in-the-borough vacation, here are some B&Bs and other special places to find a home away from home:

Sterling Bed and Breakfast

686 Sterling Place | (718) 499-2509

www.sterlingbedbreakfast.com

Steps from the Botanic Garden, The [Brooklyn Museum](#) and [Prospect Park](#), this lush bed and breakfast is smack in the middle of Brooklyn culture. What makes it even more inviting is the private garden and sitting parlor.

Owners Masha Hamilton and [David Orr](#) also have a private cottage to rent.

Rugby Gardens

317 Rugby Road | (718) 469-2244

rugbygardens.googlepages.com

Take a step back in time at this Victorian mansion on a sycamore tree-lined street in [Flatbush](#). "Guests are treated like part of the family," said host [Sue Fishkin](#), adding there's also a porch, complete with a swing, in front of the 105-year-old house.

Escape Guesthouse

168 Bergen St. No. 1 | (718) 243-1171

www.escapeguesthouse.com

At this [Boerum Hill](#) B&B, you can take cocktail/wine tasting classes, cooking, music, dance and photography lessons and fitness workshops. Then you can relax at the bath bar, where you can purchase packages like a Margarita Bath or an Energizing Sunshine Scrub, without breaking the bank.

The Park at Sixth

601 Sixth St. | (917) 620-4126

www.parkat6.com

This lovely brownstone is a block from Prospect Park. It offers two fully-equipped rooms with private baths and phones. Breakfast is not served at this location, but there are dozens of shops and restaurants nearby to suit

every need and taste. And you don't have to leave Rover. Small pets are allowed, with approval from the innkeeper!

Loralei Bed and Breakfast

667 Argyle Road | (646) 228-4656

www.loraleinyc.com

History buffs will love this house, once owned by shipping mogul Captain Bartholomew Olmstead. Legend has it that his "bride," Lorelei, was a ghost, and that neighbors witnessed some strange occurrences in the house back in the early 1900s. Find out for yourself while you enjoy the deluxe mattress, linens and Victorian style furnishings.

Spencer Place Bed and Breakfast

155 Spencer Place | (718) 360-9227

www.spencerplacebedandbreakfast.com

Located in the heart of Bed-Stuy, this 1870s brownstone features large rooms with high ceilings. There is also a common room with plenty of books, magazines, Internet access and a printer. "We serve an organic breakfast, which is a big hit with the Europeans," said innkeeper Nancye Good, adding that guests also like the diversity of the neighborhood.

Royal Suites

1510 Ocean Pkwy. | (718) 554-3991

www.bedandbreakfast.com/new-york-brooklyn-royal-suites.html

Why stay in a room when you can rent a whole apartment? This Kensington place has fully-furnished digs to stay for as long as you wish. The setup includes maid service, parking lot and a kosher kitchen.

Celeste Guest House

126 Eighth St. | (917) 817-5963

www.celestehouse.com

This is a newly-restored 109-year-old house in Gowanus. It is uniquely decorated with color schemes of aqua on the first floor and red on the second. It is also very close to Manhattan and downtown Brooklyn restaurants. The owners pride themselves on their international experience - they speak Chinese and Japanese.

Emerald Suites 977

E. 12th St. | (718) 791-8933

www.bedandbreakfast.com/new-york-brooklyn-emerald-suites.html

If ultramodern is your thing, this Flatbush place is for you. The units are brand new, and include granite countertops, leather couches, flat-screen TVs and polished wood floors. Instead of the renovated house atmosphere, it has luxury suites.

Each unit also has its own private terrace, which overlooks the bustling neighborhood.

Dekoven Suites

30 Dekoven Court | (718) 421-1052

www.bbonline.com/ny/dekoven/index.html

This cozy spot in West Midwood has lush rooms with walk-in closets and queen-sized beds. [Karen Price](#) and three of her girlfriends were visiting from [Philadelphia](#) last week. "This is much nicer than a hotel," she said, adding that the money they saved by not staying in Manhattan let them go shopping and sightseeing. "It's warm and friendly." Innkeeper Susan said half her guests are European and the other half are visiting their families in Brooklyn. [Loralei Bed and Breakfast in Ditmas Park](#), and Dekoven Suites (r.) in West Midwood. Photos by [Aaron Showalter](#)


Read more: <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/brooklyn/brooklyn-upscale-inns-offer-places-relative-local-escape-article-1.349271#ixzz30WCogLNJ>

Chicago Tribune Article
B&B charm in the big city

July 21, 2011 By Christopher Borrelli, Tribune Newspapers




Entrance of Stay the Night bed & breakfast on East 93rd Street in Manhattan
(Chris Borrelli/Chicago Tribune)

NEW YORK — The innkeeper wore a Mets cap. He skidded his bike to a stop, removed his backpack , threw the bike's frame over his shoulder and trudged up the granite steps of the townhouse. It was raining, and from behind the wrought-iron doors we watched him fumble with his keys. He looked up, squinted at us and waved. We stood in the vestibule, where we had been waiting 40 minutes, sheltered from the downpour but unable to go farther into the building without a key. We had arrived early. So we called Nick in Queens, as instructed, and Nick had this guy bicycle across town in the rain, to the Upper East Side, to deliver keys.

"Sorry, I was all the way crosstown," the guy said, "and traffic's nuts because of the rain, you know."



We knew.

This was our first time at a Manhattan bed-and-breakfast, and within minutes I wanted to move in; there was no way this guy was going to wake us at 7 a.m. to sit around a doily-wrapped farm table and eat blueberry


pancakes while we chatted with a couple from Phoenix about museums . In fact, because it's New York and not Vermont or Maine, I had never

considered that B&Bs even existed here. But many do; and lately when it comes to finding a room in New York, where "cheap rooms" start at \$300 and higher, I'll consider everything.

Without much digging, I found several dozen B&Bs in all five boroughs. The names alone were reminders that you're not in doily country anymore. For instance, there's Rooms to Let, its comically blunt name not at all suggesting its elegant 1840 Greenwich Village brownstone. Many have minimum stays (three nights is average); and many don't actually serve breakfast. But next time I'm between a boutique hotel and a Times Square

tourist  squat, I'm heading to our Carnegie Hill B&B, which is unfortunately named Stay the Night (212-722-8300, staythenight.com). Still, you forget this as you step from the cab; Stay the Night is on East 93rd Street, steps from Madison Avenue, in a shaded, movie-ready neighborhood best described as late-'70s Woody Allen Revival. The Cooper-Hewitt design museum  is around the corner, near the Guggenheim; Sarabeth's, one of Manhattan's cozier breakfast spots, is a short walk, a storefront or two down from Corner Bookstore, so welcoming it seems carved from cherry wood. After the rain, I walked back to the inn and sat on the steps for an hour just watching the neighborhood pass.

Inside, our room (\$200, with tax) had a fireplace, high ceilings and a tarnished mirror. Wireless was spotty, but a back door opened onto a wooden deck, above a garden that curled over fences and through cramped

yards. I cribbed wireless from a nearby prep school , sat outside and read. Though it's nearly impossible to find an affordable hotel in New York, here was an accurate illusion of living on the East Side, on a perfect city block.

We stayed four days at Stay the Night, and we saw almost no one inside our building. There was no forced gentility either. No blueberries. The street was so secluded that some mornings there was almost no noise. A psychologist owns the place; his office is in back. We never saw him. But there was a sign to keep a gate closed; they had a dog. A guest scribbled a note on their note: "Is he a Dalmatian? Can we walk him?"

The next time you want to breathe in Manhattan, you know where to go.

To find a New York City B&B: bedandbreakfastnetny.com or iloveinns.com/new-york-new-york-bed-and-breakfast.html.

cborrelli@tribune.com

New York City - Budget Accommodation Guide - Bed & Breakfasts

By Susanne Pacher

In my experience, bed and breakfasts are one of the best ways of experiencing a new place. In many cases the rates can be quite reasonable although there is an increasing number of high end luxury bed and breakfasts and inns, many of whom may end up charging several hundred dollars per night as well. At some of the more budget-oriented B&Bs you can get a simple, yet usually comfortable room, often with unique décor. Sometimes bathrooms are shared which will result in lower prices, so if utmost privacy is important to you check whether your B&B accommodation offers private bathrooms.

B&B stands for "bed and breakfast", now obviously we have discussed the "bed" portion of the equation. As far as the "breakfast" portion is concerned, there are also a range of choices available. Some B&Bs will offer full breakfasts, some even with home-made ingredients, jams, preserves or various gourmet breakfast dishes etc. while others may only offer a simple continental style breakfast. In larger cities B&Bs may even exclude the breakfast option altogether, so if a nice meal in the morning is important to you, make sure you check whether your desired accommodation actually includes breakfast or not.

One additional advantage of B&Bs is that generally these places are owned by private individuals or couples who enjoy hosting people from all over the world. Quite often the hosts end up being quite entertaining and they can become your built-in local travel expert for the area. At any rate, be prepared for a rather personal experience since often the hosts share the house with the guests. Inns are usually larger and take on an atmosphere of a small historic hotel, so there the atmosphere will be less personal.

Here is a listing of websites that specialize in bed and breakfast accommodation for New York City:

<http://www.citylightsnewyork.com>

This website offers hosted bed and breakfasts in a range from US\$ 80 to US\$130. Unhosted bed and breakfasts go for between US\$ 130 and US\$ 300.

<http://www.athomeny.com>

At the time of writing this article, this website offered single occupancy rooms for US\$75 and up while most double occupancy rooms ranged between US\$125 and US\$175 (and higher).

<http://www.nyhabitat.com>

This website specializes in apartment rentals and has a variety of different types of apartments available. As of March 2005 their rates were as follows:

Studio: \$85 to \$165

One Bedroom: \$135 to \$225

Two Bedrooms: \$200 to \$375

Special Apartments: \$250 to \$500

<http://www.bedandbreakfast.com>

This website offers quite a few bed and breakfasts that start below US\$100 per night and their listings are divided between Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. I have picked out the ones that come in at the lower end of the scale although you will find a lot more properties that offer rates in the range from US\$100 and up.

<http://www.bnbfinder.com> offers several properties in New York City ranging from US\$40 and up.

Here is a listing of bed and breakfasts that I could find for under \$100 a night:

Stay The Night Manhattan, NY, \$60-\$125

1291 Bed & Breakfast Accommodations Manhattan, NY, \$40-\$150

Chelsea Lodge - Manhattan, NY, \$95 - \$110

Bed and Breakfast NYC - Manhattan, NY, \$95 - \$225

Rooms in Soho Loft - Manhattan, NY, \$90 - \$110

Bed and Breakfast Mont Morris - Manhattan, NY

Efuru Guest House - Manhattan, NY, \$60 - \$125

Room in East Village - Manhattan, NY, \$80 - \$100

The Harlem Flophouse - Manhattan, NY, \$75 - \$100

Regina's New York B&B in Brooklyn Brooklyn, NY, \$75-\$150

Honey's Home Brooklyn, NY, \$75-\$150

Bibi's Garden - Brooklyn, NY, \$65 - \$125

Angelique Bed and Breakfast - Brooklyn, NY, \$75 - \$150

Eve's B&B - Brooklyn, NY, \$70 - \$125

Astoria B&B - Queens, NY, \$50 - \$70

The Harbor House - Staten Island, NY, \$59 - \$150

Victorian Manor Inn - Staten Island, NY, \$75 - \$120

Victorian Bed And Breakfast Of Staten Island - Staten Island, NY, \$75 - \$105

Victorian Villa - Staten Island, NY, : \$79 - \$98

Hartshorne House - Staten Island, NY, \$55 - \$95

Other bed and breakfast directory websites that you may want to check include the following:

<http://www.bbdirectory.com>

<http://www.bestinns.com>

<http://www.bbonline.com>

<http://www.ibbp.com>

<http://www.iloveinns.com>

<http://www.newyorkbedandbreakfast.us>

If you have never tried b&b-ing, check out this way of travelling. You might like it too...

Susanne Pacher is the publisher of a website called Travel and Transitions(<http://www.travelandtransitions.com>). Travel and Transitions deals with unconventional travel and is chock full of advice, tips, real life travel experiences, interviews with travellers and travel experts, insights and reflections, cross-cultural issues, contests and many other features. You will also find stories about life and the transitions that we face as we go through our own personal life-long journeys.

Submit your own travel stories in our first travel story contest(<http://www.travelandtransitions.com/contests.htm>) and have a chance to win an amazing adventure cruise on the Amazon River.

"Life is a Journey Explore New Horizons".

The interview with photos is published at [Travel and Transitions - Interviews](#)

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Susanne_Pacher

Brooklyn's Bed and Breakfast Community Under a Cloud



- I. **The Issue:** A threat to 50 small businesses, their employees, families and neighborhoods
- II. **The Solution:** New York City legislation to give legal status and to regulate B&Bs for the benefit of all
- III. **Economic** Contributions and Impact of Brooklyn's B&Bs
- IV. **Social** Contributions and Impact of Brooklyn's B&Bs
- V. **Civic** Contributions and Impact of Brooklyn's B&Bs
- VI. **Tourism** Impact of Brooklyn's B&Bs
- VII. **Snapshots** of Brooklyn's B&Bs and their owners
- VIII. **Appendix:** Informal Survey of Brooklyn's B&Bs, raw data

I. STATEMENT OF ISSUES

The continued existence of traditional-style Bed and Breakfast establishments in New York City is in serious doubt, posing a threat to the livelihood of an estimated 50 small businesses in Brooklyn alone, the surrounding neighborhoods and the travelers they serve. It threatens the significant economic and social benefits to the neighborhoods in which they operate. This threat stems from the ongoing efforts of the city and state to stop the operation of illegal hotels in multi-family dwellings, an activity in which traditional B&Bs DO NOT engage.

- **What is a traditional-style B&B?**
- Bed and Breakfasts are traditionally smaller, more intimate lodgings in owner-occupied one- and two-family homes.
- Individuals and families who have the extra room have been able to earn a living or supplement incomes by renting rooms on a short-term basis, typically with breakfast and housekeeping included.
- B&Bs provide a completely different lodging experience in residential areas offering guests a unique opportunity to immerse in the local culture.
- Visitors can stay in close proximity to relatives and friends they come to visit.

- **Historical lack of legal standing for B&Bs in New York City.**
- Of the 62 counties in New York State, 57 of them have regulations dealing specifically with the definition and operation of Bed and Breakfasts.
- No such regulations exist in the 5 counties of New York City.
- The treatment of B&Bs in New York City has been uneven, each city agency trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, making the operating climate difficult at best for consumers and business owners alike.
- The NYC Finance Department has a classification for 'Small Operators' under which B&Bs pay all required taxes: state and city sales tax, hotel tax, room tax and occupancy taxes, which amount to nearly a 16% of sales contribution to state and city revenue.
- The Building Department has no classification for B&Bs.
- Under the current building codes, it appears that the only strictly legal provision is for two "bedrooms" in one-and two-family homes.
- Enforcement has been intermittent – until recently – and the current interpretation of the code makes the outlook for B&Bs bleak.

- **What is an illegal hotel?**
- The 2007-8 financial collapse, created a large inventory of empty apartments that hit the short-term rental market in order to generate cash flow for developers.

- Residents of such buildings who had bought their units were outraged that they had bought apartments in what were turning out to be de facto 'hotels'.
- To stop such activity, the state enacted legislation (known as the multi-family dwelling law) specifically to make it illegal to rent out rooms or apartments in multifamily dwellings (defined as buildings for three or more families where the owner does not live in the unit).
- B&Bs, as defined here, are in one- and two- family units where the owner resides.
- This legislation does not apply to B&B's activities.
- The sponsors of the new legislation never intended to make B&Bs illegal.

- **Enter AirBnB.**

- Using AirBnB, property owners can anonymously list properties for rent.
- City or state enforcement has no way of knowing whether such rentals are legal or illegal.
- The ongoing battle between AirBnB and the State and City is rooted in
 - A) an inability to identify properties and their status,
 - B) required taxes may not be paid/reported,
 - C) do not purchase innkeeper's insurance,
 - D) do not meet fire codes.

- **B&B owners typically:**

- do not use AirBnB,
- pay all required taxes,
- are not covered by the multi-family dwelling law, who
- have commercial B&B insurance which requires that they also
- meet minimum fire safety rules,

Brooklyn Bed and Breakfasts have been subject to renewed and vigorous enforcement. This enforcement is not under the new law, but under decades' old rules against SROs -- recently dusted off in the redoubled effort to find violators.

As a result, B&Bs are caught in the crossfire of the AirBnB debate resulting in potential severe financial penalties which will force many out of business if not addressed.

II. TOWARD THE IDEAL SOLUTION

It's time New York City joined the other 57 counties in New York State as well as other major cities across the nation and the globe in welcoming, recognizing and regulating traditional-style B&B operations.

-Most major cities have legislation that recognizes the economic importance to tourism and the contributions to the civic and social fabric of their communities of Bed and Breakfast establishments and regulates their safe, sensible operation.

-In order to combat unsafe conditions or operations that have a negative impact on quality of life in the community, community leaders need to adopt a uniform approach to defining and regulating the activities of businesses that have until now operated in a legislative shadow in New York City, which has stunted the development and viability of this very unique and important economic activity.

-The best and most direct way to correct this problem is through legislation at the City Council level, crafted with input from interested parties including the B&B owners themselves, and community groups who benefit from their activities.

-Legislation exists in other major cities across the nation that could easily be adapted for use in New York City. The B&B industry stands ready to assist in crafting legislation that will encourage this economic activity in a way that encourages local employment, local spending and community service in a way that is safe and sensible for all interested parties.

III. Economic Contributions of Brooklyn's Bed & Breakfasts to the local neighborhoods, the Cith and the State of New York

Local Businesses Benefit

- Our guests spend most of their time and money in Brooklyn
 - Eating
 - Shopping
 - Visiting our cultural institutions.
- The B&Bs provide guests with our picks of local
 - Eateries
 - Shops
 - Tour guides
 - Car services to and from airports
 - Unique destinations and experiences in this great borough and beyond.
- Guests spend hundreds of dollars a day at locally owned and operated businesses throughout the borough. This money enriches the community because it stays in the neighborhoods.
- Most of Brooklyn's B&Bs have working relationships with one another as well as local hotels to make referrals when necessary.

Quantifiable Economic Benefits*

- Brooklyn's B&Bs host an average of 900 guests each per year in the Borough. That's mean 45,000 guests in an estimated 50 B&Bs.
- The average Brooklyn B&B guest spends an estimated \$1,100 during their average 3+ day visit to the Borough (totaling \$50 million annually spent in local neighborhoods).
- These guests enjoy 50% of their meals (beyond breakfast which we serve) in the local neighborhood restaurants.
- Brooklyn's 50 B&Bs pay an average of \$15,000 per year in State and City sale and use taxes, which adds up to more than \$750,000 in added revenues.

*Please see Appendix I at the end of this report for the raw data and survey questions.

IV. The Social Impact of Brooklyn Bed & Breakfasts

We Are Ambassadors for Brooklyn & Our Local Neighborhoods

- Brooklyn's B&B owners love what they do!
- We consider running a B&B as a vocation, not a job.
- We are proud of our homes, our neighborhoods and Brooklyn at large.
- We offer a unique hospitality experience.
- Brooklyn hosts a population density most of our guests never experience in other parts of the United States, and the world.
- Our guests leave with a better appreciation of our city and its complex and rich cultural life.
- B&Bs promote Brooklyn's
 - Economic dynamism
 - The scope and importance of our arts community
 - The global impact and breadth of our creative life in everything from literature and music to food, crafts and design.
- Brooklyn B&B Hosts create long-lasting relationships and memories for our guests.

Who Stays in Brooklyn's diverse B&Bs?

- **The majority of our guests are**
 - Visiting children and grandchildren who are permanent Brooklyn's residents.
 - First-time visitors from abroad or other parts of the United States who are drawn to Brooklyn for the opportunity to experience something other than the usual anonymous New York experience.
 - Travelers looking for affordable and homey accommodations.
- **Guests stay in our B&Bs because**
 - They can be close, usually walking distance, to their families.
 - They are in Brooklyn to attend weddings and intimate family events.
 - Their families are relocating to Brooklyn and they want to stay in the B&Bs to get a feel for the neighborhoods.
 - Guests are here to attend
 - Reunions
 - Conferences, and interviews at local colleges
 - Hospitals and cultural institutions where hotels are few and far between.
- A large number of our guests are repeat customers or people who have heard of us through repeat customers. They keep coming back.

V. Civic Impact of the Brooklyn B&Bs

Virtually all of the B&Bs in Brooklyn contribute directly to their local neighborhoods in many ways. Here are just a few of the ways in which B&Bs make a big difference.

Cultural Infrastructure Support.

- Brooklyn's B&Bs support the cultural infrastructure of the community because they understand its importance to a thriving business. B&Bs are members of cultural organizations such as the Prospect Park Alliance, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the Brooklyn Museum, the New York Aquarium, the Park Slope Civic Council, the Brooklyn Historical Society, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and others.
- Not only do they join, they tend to join at higher levels of giving such as BAM's "Patron" level, Prospect Park's "Partner" level or the Botanic Garden's "President's Circle".

Support of the Arts and Educational Partners.

- Virtually all of the B&Bs in Brooklyn support both public and private education, primarily through donations of "Free Nights" offered for auction at school fundraisers. But we also provide meeting space free for school groups such as the PTA.
- B&Bs sponsor recitals where neighbors and B&B guests are invited to hear exceptional students play classical music, where struggling artists can display their paintings, photographs or others can show off choreography, dance and acting skills, in one case providing space for a full production of Shakespeare. All of this when it might otherwise be impossible for these young artists to get exposure for their talents.

Neighborhood Activism.

- By nature, the people who operate B&Bs tend to be community minded, highly organized, and aware of what is going on in their local neighborhoods. They are often the very ones to help galvanize neighbors to improve quality of life in the neighborhoods they serve, be it supporting bikes lanes, composting, participating in block association activities, buying locally, spending locally and investing locally. They are of course also motivated by good business sense.

VI. Tourism Impact of Brooklyn's B&Bs

Promoting Brooklyn Tourism

- Trip Advisor
 - Lists several dozen B&B choices in Brooklyn alone!
 - Offers unsolicited reviews of the diverse assortment of Bed and Breakfasts
- **As Brooklyn has increased its profile as a tourist destination, foreign media has increasingly focused on Brooklyn's B&Bs as some of the best boutique establishments in the city.**
 - The London Observer's Sunday travel magazine did a feature on boutique hotels and B&Bs in NY: *"Uptown, Downtown, Brooklyn and Staten Island. New York's hippest hotels and B&Bs are not in central locations but are all off-Broadway."* That article went on to list B&Bs in Brooklyn as first and second choices.
 - Brooklyn's B&Bs are now listed in many non-English guidebooks bringing guests directly to Brooklyn for their holidays.
 - The Guardian lists the top 10 places to stay in New York and many are from Brooklyn
- **Brooklyn's B&Bs help guests plan**
 - Walking, biking, and driving tours of Brooklyn's diverse and culturally rich neighborhoods

We encourage our guests to visit our historic neighborhoods

- Brooklyn Heights
 - Fort Greene
 - DUMBO
 - Ditmas Park
 - Bedford Stuyvesant
 - Prospect Heights
 - Williamsburg
 - Coney Island
 - Brighton Beach
 - Park Slope
 - Lefferts Gardens
 - Bay Ridge
 - Crown Heights
 - And our borough's own Chinatown.
-
- **Through their attendance at cultural institutions and events, our guests support**
 - The Brooklyn Academy of Music
 - Green-Wood Cemetery
 - Prospect Park
 - Brooklyn Botanical Gardens
 - Brooklyn Museum
 - Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra
 - New York Aquarium
 - Brooklyn Historical Society
 - Brooklyn Children's Museum
 - Weeksville Heritage Center

- Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir
- Brooklyn College Center for the Performing Arts
- Barclay's Center

**VII. SNAPSHOTS OF SOME OF BROOKLYN'S BED AND
BREAKFAST'S AND THEIR OWNERS**

Akwaaba Mansion

At Home In Brooklyn

Bibi's Garden

Blue Porch

Dekoven Suites

Honey's

The Isabella at Ditmas Park

Leffert's Manor

Loralei

Rugby Gardens

The Sofia Inn

Akwaaba Mansion Bed & Breakfast

347 MacDonough St.

Brooklyn, NY 11233

www.akwaaba.com

Owners: Monique Greenwood and Glenn Pogue



When we purchased the dilapidated “haunted house” on Bed Stuy’s MacDonough Street in 1995 with hopes of making it our home and a luxury bed and breakfast, people looked at us as if we had three eyes. We do. The third eye is the eye of vision—the ability to see the possibility.

Now, nearly 20 years later, a restored Akwaaba Mansion has been the home where we’ve raised our daughter, played host to countless numbers of guests, and helped transform a community in the process. We love welcoming those visiting friends and family in the neighborhood, offering high-touch hospitality to high-pressured local folks looking to get away without going away, and serving as ambassadors to tourists from across the globe, all of whom gain an immediate appreciation for our neighborhood’s beautiful brownstones and beautiful brown people.

Over the past 12 years, Akwaaba Mansion has also been the springboard for a host of locally-owned businesses opening down the street on Lewis Avenue. We personally invested in a block of retail storefronts and attracted tenants that have operated upscale eateries, coffee shops, book stores and gift shops. This conscious community-building effort has added to the quality of life for Bedford Stuyvesant residents, and these small businesses have benefited greatly from the patronage of guests frequenting the B&B.

With Akwaaba Mansion in Brooklyn as our home base, we have been fortunate enough to expand our hospitality reach to save historic properties and open similar B&Bs in Washington, DC; Cape May, NJ; New Orleans, LA; and The Poconos in PA, employing close to a dozen residents and hopefully inspiring many more along the way.

Monique is CEO (Chief Enjoyment Officer) of Akwaaba and has been hailed by the Professional Association of Innkeepers International (PAII) as one the top 10 influential individuals in the

innkeeping industry. She has served on the boards of PAII, the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Bridge Street Development Corporation, The Weeksville Society and Community Board 3. Named as Small Business of the Year by both the Giuliani and the Bloomberg administrations, Akwaaba Mansion stands as a beacon of what's possible when passion meets purpose and persistence.

**At Home in Brooklyn
15 Prospect Park West
Brooklyn, NY 11215**

www.athomeinbrooklyn.com

Owners: Hedy Matteson, Donald Matteson, Marco Crocchianti



At Home In Brooklyn opened in 2008 by Donald Matteson and Marco Crocchianti, two friends who met in Italy while Donald was living in Tuscany, detoxing from a 20-year stint on Wall Street. Donald, an art lover and amateur collector, and Marco, a painter of hyperrealist oils, became fast friends, and stayed in touch when Donald returned to the US and his townhouse on Prospect Park West in Brooklyn.

Park Slope, as many neighborhoods in Brooklyn, is long on families and short on affordable housing, meaning not enough beds for visiting family. Donald, on his return from Europe, had a big empty house on the park and saw a need and decided to try an urban B&B as 1 year experiment. Marco, itching to leave his small hill town, was drawn to Brooklyn's art scene and he decided to join Donald to open **At Home In Brooklyn** in 2008. 7 years later, **At Home** is one of the top-rated B&Bs in Brooklyn and has been selected by an international travel magazine as one of the top 10 small hotel/B&Bs in New York City.

Drawing on Donald's sense of what travelers want, based on his 20-years' experience as a global business traveler, and Marco's Italian eye for design and style, they have created an atmosphere where guests truly feel at home in Brooklyn, with an artist in residence and a consummate host.

Bibi's Garden Bed&Breakfast

762 Westminster Road,

Brooklyn, NY 11230

Owner: Bibi Kisoensing



Bibi's Garden Bed and Breakfast Established in 2002 Is a Victorian House in the West Ditmas Park Section of Brooklyn, NY. Bibi enjoys all of the guests that visit her establishment. My guests support this small business. In my community we have a wide range of various restaurants, super markets, car services, and our famous theme park at Coney Island. Transportation is very convenient for our guests. We have guests from all over the world as well as local guests seeking a weekend getaway. Our prices are affordable, especially for our local guests who are here to visit their children, grandchildren, friends and family. All of my guests feel right at home upon arrival. For further information please visit our website:WWW.Bibisgarden.COM

Blue Porch Bed & Breakfast

15 Dekoven Court

Brooklyn, NY 11230

Owners: Trudy Raschkind Steinfeld and Paul Steinfeld



..opened the Blue Porch Bed and Breakfast in our single-family house in West Midwood, Brooklyn in 2009. We did this in response to Paul's being laid off from full-time work during the recession, which had also impacted Trudy's work as a consultant. Over the last 5½ years, we have built a highly rated, successful, and satisfying business.

Our guests come from all over the U.S. and much of the rest of the world. All have chosen to stay with us because of our B&B's quiet, calm, home-like atmosphere and large, airy rooms; our personal attention, including careful food planning for people on restricted diets; and the opportunity for rich discussions on many topics. We also offer practice space and the use of our baby grand piano to guests who are musicians. Since we are life-long New Yorkers, we love to help guests customize their visit, and we enjoy our role as unofficial ambassadors for Brooklyn and New York. Guests who previously only knew Manhattan are delighted to discover the wide range of excellent and diverse cultural sites and events in Brooklyn (e.g., The Brooklyn Academy of Music, Green-Wood Cemetery, Prospect Park, Brooklyn Botanical Gardens, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra, New York Aquarium, Brooklyn Historical Society, Brooklyn Children's Museum, Weeksville Heritage Center, Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir, Brooklyn College Center for the Performing Arts). Many of our repeat guests are here

visiting children and grandchildren who live in our neighborhood or are students at NYC colleges. Most of our guests enjoy their stay so much that they recommend our B&B to other family members and friends. We always guide our guests to the many terrific restaurants within walking distance of our B&B, as well as outstanding ethnic restaurants elsewhere in Brooklyn. Our guests also patronize local pharmacies, grocery stores, dry cleaners, florists, wine shops, and car services. Despite the recent economic crisis, The Blue Porch Bed and Breakfast has made it possible for us to remain productive citizens (paying city and state sales and hotel taxes quarterly) and to help support other local businesses. Our business is small, and we hope to be able to continue growing it so that we can stay in this house in our wonderful community that has been our home for 30 years. www.BluePorchNYC.com

Dekoven Suites Bed & Breakfast

30 Dekoven Court

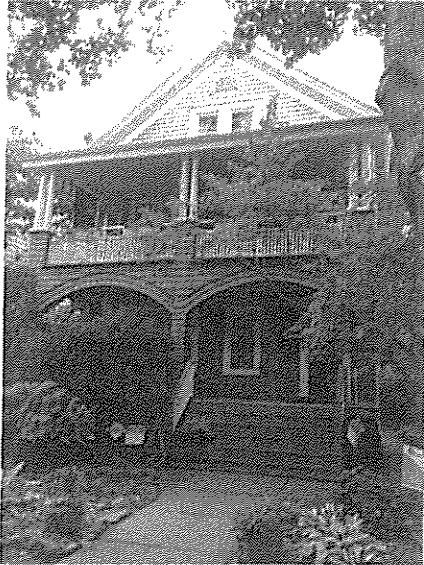
Brooklyn, NY 11230

Owner: **Susan Lehrer and Chalo Smukler**



Dekoven Suites Bed & Breakfast opened in 2006 in the single family home of Susan Lehrer and Chalo Smukler; where they have been living with their 2 children since 1988. The Bed & Breakfast idea was the result of the impact of an empty nest coupled with college tuitions. Our home had been a destination for years for our own out of town family & friends as well as our children's friends; so when the tuition bills started to hit, hosting guests was a natural fit for a large home with suddenly-empty bedrooms. Ditmas Park has long been known for unique Victorian homes located on safe and quiet tree lined streets. Similar to upstate New York where Bed & Breakfasts are popular, Susan and Chalo reasoned that Ditmas Park would be the perfect location for visitors who want easy access to the excitement of NYC, but who prefer the charm of old world homes located close to their Brooklyn family and friends. For the past 8 years, Dekoven Suites has become that preferred destination for hundreds of visitors to New York City who return year after year to a place that they consider their "home away from home". In addition to providing affordable lodgings for many foreign tourists, Dekoven Suites has become the affordable "Home Base" for hundreds of grandparents on limited incomes who want to visit their children and grandchildren for births, birthdays, graduations and other life celebrations. Brooklyn is all about community and Dekoven Suites provides affordable, comfortable, high quality lodging to our neighbors relatives & friends; as well as tourists who come to experience first-hand the charm and hospitality of Brooklyn. For further information, please visit our website: www.dekovensuites.com

Honey's Bed and Breakfast
770 Westminster Rd,
Brooklyn, NY 11230
Owners: Laura and Carlos Berger



We moved to West Midwood almost 20 years ago finding Brooklyn to be a great place to raise a family. At the time it was more affordable and peaceful while offering all the urban benefits. As our family grew up and left home, we started hosting foreign exchange students. At some point we stopped hosting students and began hosting adults and families. Eventually we started a webpage and began to call ourselves a bed and breakfast – Honeys Bed and Breakfast. This additional income became a way to offset our expenses, helping us with the upkeep of our beloved historic home.

At Honey's we offer reasonably priced, warm and friendly, clean and comfortable, accommodations. Most of our guests are relatives or friends of families who live in our neighborhood. Often, our neighbors don't have space for guests so we provide the guest room. Because we are in walking distance to the people they wish to visit, our guest's come often, and in turn, and we provide them a home away from home. Hosting tourists from across the US and abroad, we offer a homey and relaxed atmosphere with a healthy breakfast to start the day, and a comfortable place to come home to after a long day of sightseeing. We often help with their plans and are

cultural ambassadors of Brooklyn and NYC. We help bring families and friends together so they can celebrate special occasions. Parents visit their adult children, Brooklyn College events, or weddings, graduations, showers, and births. One man comes regularly to be with his son as he goes through chemo. He needs the support of a homey space, and we are happy to provide it. In support of our neighborhood, we recommend our guests use local restaurants, car services, food markets and public transportation. We feel that we are major contributors to the economic health of our neighborhood. We feel privileged and lucky to have this business.

The Isabella at Ditmas Park Bed & Breakfast

474 Rugby Road
Brooklyn, NY 11230



The Isabella at Ditmas Park is an owner occupied Victorian House. The house, built in 1903, has been completely renovated bringing back to life the original oak detail throughout the first floor. The owners have lived in the house since 1980 and in addition to renovating they have decorated the house with antiques, art and African sculptures. This Victorian home is located on a quiet tree lined street on the south end of Ditmas Park in the heart of Brooklyn. Ditmas Park is one of many mini neighborhoods that make up the larger historical Victorian Flatbush. The neighborhood is the largest concentration of free standing Victorian homes in North America. Each home, with its own unique charm and detail has recognizable Victorian features that often remind visitors of their own hometowns across the United States. Most of the guests are retired grandparents visiting their children to celebrate, weddings, births and other family events, including baby-sitting. All the guests patronize the local restaurants; visit the Brooklyn Museums, gardens, Coney Island and other up and coming neighborhoods in the borough. There are two bedrooms with a shared bath as well as a sitting room, dining room and outside deck and garden for breakfast where the guests make themselves at home. Located two blocks from the Manhattan bound subways and local Brooklyn bus routes. Just forty minutes from midtown Manhattan, one has easy access to museums, concerts, and restaurants from virtually every country in the world.

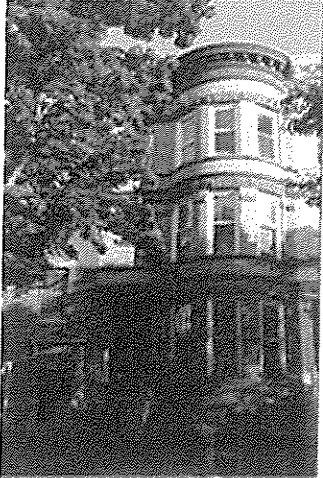
Lefferts Manor Bed & Breakfast

80 Rutland Road

Brooklyn, NY 11225

Owner: Mark and Monica Osborne

www.leffertsmanorbedandbreakfast.com



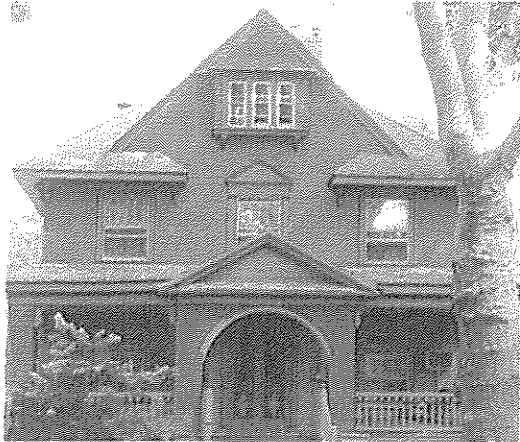
Combining their love for design and decor and their 15 years of experience in the NYC hospitality industry, husband-and-wife team Mark and Monika Osborne decided to convert their 4-story brownstone into Lefferts Manor Bed and Breakfast, a full-service, home-based alternative to a corporate hotel right in historic Lefferts Manor area, in the heart of Prospect Lefferts Gardens. Lefferts Manor B & B opened in 2008 and was immediately welcomed by the neighborhood around whose visiting family and friends now had a cozy, nearby place to stay and could really experience their loved one's Brooklyn lives by walking the same blocks, frequenting the same shops and restaurants and enjoying nearby Prospect Park and the Botanic Gardens and the Brooklyn Museum.

Rugby Gardens Bed & Breakfast

317 Rugby Road

Brooklyn, NY 11226

Owners: Sue Fishkin and Michael Hurwitz



In the Fall of 2006, Sue Fishkin and Michael Hurwitz opened Rugby Gardens B&B in their home on Rugby Road in the Beverley Square West section of Ditmas Park, Brooklyn. Built by the turn-of-the-century developer, T.B. Ackerson in 1900, and lovingly painted and restored to its beautiful clapboard and shingle exterior, Rugby Gardens B&B has become the icon of the Ditmas Park neighborhood.

Taking advantage of 2 empty bedrooms on their third floor, Sue, a Feng Shui Practitioner, Interior Stylist and Fine Artist went to work re-designing each room into a comfortable guest space, while Michael, an attorney, took care of all the start-up needs like setting up an account with the city and state to collect and pay taxes, and Innkeepers Insurance. At the time, they saw Rugby Gardens as additional income making it possible to keep the house in good repair as well as expand their own lives. In 2008, Sue lost her job like millions of others across the country, and Rugby Gardens then became the crucial source of income needed to support their family of 5. Over the years they have hosted guests from all over the country and the world – parents coming to see their children, grandchildren, those attending weddings, graduations and other events, tourists, and sometimes even locals – like writers – who just need a quiet creative space to get away and think. Often, there are repeat guests who have become friends over the years. People choose to stay at Rugby Gardens because it is affordable and friendly. It is a way for foreigners to have an authentic experience when staying in a local neighborhood with a local family. Just steps from the restaurants, bars and other services reinvigorating Cortelyou Road, guests have great resources at their fingertips and contribute to the growth and sustainability of these businesses.

Guests love the B&B so much, that their unsolicited reviews on www.tripadvisor.com have ranked Rugby Gardens #6 out of 56 B&Bs in Brooklyn!

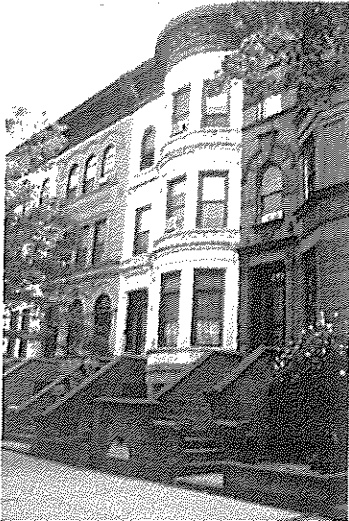
The Sofia Inn

288 Park Place

Brooklyn, NY 11238

P: (917) 865-7428

Email: thesofiainn@gmail.com



Since 1999, The Sofia Inn, situated in a well-kept brownstone in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn, an increasingly vibrant neighborhood, has been offering comfortable, safe, clean, affordable accommodations. Most of our guests come to town for a wedding, a new baby, a bar mitzvah, a visit to Pratt Institute. Others are from overseas, having decided to make their visit more interesting by staying in fabulous Brooklyn. Nearly all of our guests are on a budget. They appreciate staying in an affordable place where the owner gives them lots of personal attention because he knows what it's like to be new to the city. No matter where they are from, all guests pump huge sums of money into the local economy.

Every single guest who stays at The Sofia Inn asks me for restaurant advice. Many ask for pharmacies, gift shops, florists, and tickets to concerts, Broadway shows and sporting events. If we cannot accommodate them, we offer the names of other B&Bs or hotels in the area as a courtesy. Local businesses know who I am and appreciate the extra money my guests (and I) spend in support of the economy. I provide a service that is good for tourists, good for Brooklyn, and good for the city and state's tax base. I like to think that I am more than an inn-keeper; I make phone calls for guests, I drive them free of charge to the doctors if need be, I look up information for them on the Internet—in short, I am a caring, gracious host who wants his guests to return home with fond memories of their Brooklyn stay.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

Name: Suzette Sundao (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 440 Madison St. 1R

I represent: AKRON

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Alison Greene (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 304 West 56th St. Apt 1C

I represent: AKRON

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Carol Thomas (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 200 Delaware St

I represent: 11205

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jennifer Taus

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Richard Amelius

Address: 307 W. 79th St., # 745

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bennett Baumer

Address: 777 10 Ave.

I represent: Housing Conservation Coordinators

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Matt Thomas (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 826 9 Ave.

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Maritza Silva-Farrell (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Real Affordability For All

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Kayla S. Rivera (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Goddard Riverside SRO Low

Address: _____ Project

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RICH ROBBINS

Address: 317 W 103RD ST, MANHATTAN

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOHN BRAVO

Address: beemas2000@AOL.com

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SHOSHANNAH BERMOSCHE

Address: 910 W EA, 80

I represent: myself

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MICHAEL

Address: _____

I represent: 4 FAMILY

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: GORDON CHAMBERS (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 171 Ave

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Sarah Desmond (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: Housing Conservation Coordinators

I represent: 777 Tenth Avenue NYC 10019

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Jay Loid
Address: 279 E 6th Apt 4E
I represent: NYHTC
Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Marti Weithman 464 West
Address: ~~31 West 109th St~~ 152nd St.
I represent: Goddard Riverside SRO Law
Address: 51 West 109th St Project

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Daseana Glover
Address: _____
I represent: Tenants & Neighbors
Address: 236 W 27th Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jennifer Tausi

Address: 65 Roebling St.

I represent: Airbnb

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Vivian Riffelmacher

Address: 715 W 173rd St #28

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: 77 105 Ave W (WFTA)

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 01-20-15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maria P. Piro

Address: 281 Lockman Ave

I represent: Airbnb Host

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

Name: Senator Adriano Espaillat (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: NYS Senate

Address: 5030 Broadway

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/2014

Name: Wathley Williams (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 671 Mother Gaston Blvd
Brooklyn, NY 11212

I represent: Myself

Address: 671 Mother Gaston Blvd
Brooklyn 11212

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

Name: Sara Aesson (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: ~~Brooklyn~~ Brooklyn - Williamsburg

I represent: I am in favor of AIRBIOB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/26/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ally Ben Linder

Address: 17 W 34th St NYC

I represent: I support Airbnb

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kimberly Price

Address: 14 West 119th St New York, New York 10026

I represent: AmBnB NY

Address: Notion Retreat

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Audrey Smolett

Address: 15 W 55 St 10019

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Letitia James - Public Advocate (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Assembly member Linda Rosenthal (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 230 W 72 Street, NY NY 10023

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Manhattan Borough President, Gale Brewer (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 1 Centre Street, 19th fl.

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LAZ BARR

Address: 355 EAST 50th

I represent: Ain Bob

Address: same as above

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Evelyn BADA

Address: 233 14th St. Bklyn

I represent: Self / AIRBNB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/23/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RACHEL CHRISTMAS DEBRICK

Address: 54 W 130 ST NYC 10037

I represent: UHAB

Address: 120 WALL ST NYE 10037

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Amber Ray Cutting

Address: 293 Harper St. Brooklyn NY 11211

I represent: Airbnb

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bijan Jasbeen

Address: 356 W. 40th Street

I represent: Airbnb as a host

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carina Benzola

Address: 128 2nd Street Brooklyn, NY 11231

I represent: Myself

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LIZ LONGO

Address: 625 CATHEN AVENUE BROOKLYN

I represent: ABOB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GORDON COOPER

Address: 345 W 70th STREET NYC

I represent: SELF / DAUGHTER

Address: 19 TIEMANN PLACE NYC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

FOR SHARING MY HOME in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CARINA BEZZOLA

Address: 128 7ND STREET

I represent: MYSELF

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: State Senator Liz Krueger

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Assembly Member Richard Gottfried

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARINA METALIOS

Address: 451 E 14

I represent: Rent Stab tenant

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Melissa Chapman

Address: 335 Adams St. Suite 2700, Bklyn NY 11201

I represent: Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matthew Abuella

Address: 710 West 173 St. 1032

I represent: The West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: Hell's Kitchen

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Susan BARRETT

Address: 312 W 48th St. #24 MC10036

I represent: WSNA

Address: West 52nd St. NYC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SARA ROMANOSKI

Address: ~~143 AVENUE B~~ 90 STANTON ST 10002

I represent: East Village Community Coalition

Address: 143 AVENUE B 10009

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PAT VENTURA 11355

Address: 43-36 147 St FLUSHING, NY

I represent: MYSELF

Address: SAME AS ABOVE

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SUSAN STEINBERG

Address: 5 STUYVESANT OVAL

I represent: STUYVESANT TOWN - PETER COOPER

Address: SAME AS ABOVE

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elizabeth "Liz" Mandarano

Address: 7 Arlington Place

I represent: Nyc B+B Assoc

Address: zephyr1919@aol.com

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 12-20-15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mary Ann Rothman

Address: 110 Riverside Dr

I represent: Council of NY Cooperatives & Condominiums

Address: 250 W 57 St

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Matt Wiseman (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 569 W 5th St Apt 1A

I represent: Airbnb

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tara Liao

Address: 517 47 St

I represent: Support Airbnb

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1.20.15

Name: Lydia Silbies-Rockett (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 182 Havemeyer St

I represent: Velma Vintage Small Business

Address: 26 Meserole St

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: YONATAN TADELE

Address: _____

I represent: COOPER SQUARE & ILLEGAL HOTELS WORKING GROUP

Address: 61 EAST 4th ST, NEW YORK, NY 10003

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Daniella Liebling

Address: Park Slope, Brooklyn

I represent: MYSELF

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ange Cortner

Address: 61 E 4th St.

I represent: Illegal Hotels working group / Cooper Square Committee

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chief Thomas Jensen

Address: _____

I represent: Five Department of the City of New York

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alex Cohn

Address: _____

I represent: General Counsel, Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elizabeth Gilzer

Address: _____

I represent: Director, Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maryam A-Aleem

Address: _____

I represent: Assemblymember Deborah Glick

Address: 853 Broadway

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anne Cunningham

Address: 246 W 73 St 920 NY 10023

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: Jan 20, 2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Julie Weintraub

Address: 347 E 5th St, Brooklyn

I represent: _____

Address: _____

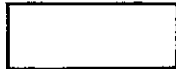
Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

4



THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alice Barrett

Address: 220 Westminister Rd Brooklyn 11218

I represent: Airbnb

Address: Airbnb.com



THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ALISON GREENE

Address: 304 WEST 88th ST APT 1C

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: WWW.AIRBNB.COM

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: BARBARA WILLIAMS

Address: 406 Stealing Pl #4A

I represent: ANHD

Address: 50 Broad St NY NY



Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**



Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: FRANK W. DERZ

Address: 287 E 139 ST BROOKLYN NY

I represent: AV 8 B

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**



Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SHOSHANNAH BENMOSCHE

Address: 910 WEST END AVE SD

I represent: myself

Address: N/A

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**



Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: HANS PENZ

Address: 262 RICHMOND TERR

I represent: _____

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

A

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KAREN WIGHT-GREENBERG

Address: 291 MARITENSE ST, BROOKLYN NY 11226

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: AIRBNB.COM

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

△

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ellen La Forge

Address: 68 Belmont Place, Staten Island, NY

I represent: _____

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

△

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOSHUA GREENBERG

Address: 291 MARITENSE ST, BROOKLYN NY 11226

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: AIRBNB.COM

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**



Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Gayle DeCosta (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 654 E. 157th St Bronx 10455

I represent: Airbnb

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**



Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Lee Thomas (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 109-25 97th Street Ozone Park NY

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**



Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: LINDA LANDIVAR (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 4355 BOWNE ST, FLUSHING 11355

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

4

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 01/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Daniel Kouame

Address: 3155 Broadway

I represent: Airbnb

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**



Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carol Thomas

Address: 200 Adelphi St. Brooklyn
Milbros

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MICHAEL

Address: _____

I represent: STRAHA

Address: 2214 FRED DOUGLAS BLVD #161
10026

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: STANLEY MARTE

Address: 357 South 3rd St. Apt. #16 Brooklyn NY

I represent: THE NEW YORK HOTEL TRADES COUNCIL

Address: 305 44th St. New York, N.Y. 10036

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LESLEY-Ann COOPER

Address: 241 Midwood St, Apt 3L Brooklyn NY 11225

I represent: New York City Hotel Trade Council

Address: 305 W 44th Street NY NY 10036

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karlene Longchallan

Address: 259 East 93rd St 1 Floor BKlyn NY 11212

I represent: New York Hotels Trade Council

Address: 305 44th Street N.Y. 10036

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Norm Laford

Address: 788 Columbus Ave NYC 10025

I represent: Park West Village

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JS Cerullo

Address: 777 10th Avenue

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Allison Tupper

Address: 777 10th Avenue

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

A

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carolyn Williams

Address: 626 E 97th St

I represent: Airbnb

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matt Thomas

Address: 77 10th Avenue

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Δ

Appearance Card

1

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 1/19/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Edwin Cosme

Address: 1726 Mermaid Avenue

I represent: Airbnb Hostess

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tom Cayler

Address: 777 10th Avenue

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Pete Diaz

Address: 777 10th Avenue

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: VIVAN Riffelmacher

Address: 777 10th Avenue

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

(T)

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Falkenberg

Address: 330 Seventh Ave NY NY 1001

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: _____

(T)

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kenneth Burris

Address: 1501 M St NW WASHINGTON DC

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: _____

(T)

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: David Hantman

Address: AIRBNB

I represent: AIRBNB Rep

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

T

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karl Theodor Wadschenberg

Address: 330 S. 1st Ave. Brooklyn NY 11201

I represent: Airbnb

Address: _____

T

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lee Thomas

Address: 109-25 97th Street Ozone PK

I represent: Airbnb

Address: _____

TT

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Melissa Chapman

Address: 335 Adams St Brooklyn 11201

I represent: Airbnb Ref

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Linda Landivar

Address: 4355 Bowne St Flushing NY

I represent: AIRBNS

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alice Barrett

Address: 220 Westminister Rd BKLYN NY

I represent: AIRBNS

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alison Green

Address: 304 W 88th St Apt 1c NY NY

I represent: AIRBNS

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Daniel Koume

Address: 3155 Broadway NY

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Evelyn Badia

Address: 233 14th St Brooklyn

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gayle Dacosta

Address: 654 E 156 St

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elle La Forge

Address: 68 Belmont Pl SI NY

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rachel Donovan

Address: 40 Harrison St NY, NY

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nan Doyle

Address: 65 S Oxford St Brooklyn

I represent: AIRBNB

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sulia Weintraub

Address: 347 E 5th St Brooklyn NY

I represent: AIRBMB

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ray L'cera

Address: 287 E 139th St Bronx NY

I represent: AIRBNR

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

T

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Joshua Wright Greenberg

Address: 291 Martense St BKLYN NY 11226

I represent: AIRBMB

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Math Abvelo

Address: 777 10th Avenue

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sadia Rahman

Address: 123 Williams Street

I represent: Urban Justice Center

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Georgette Fleisher

Address: _____

I represent: Friends of Petrosino Square

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kathleen Treat

Address: _____

I represent: Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Ass.

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jean Daniel Nolan

Address: _____

I represent: West 47th Street Block Association

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sarah Desmond

Address: _____

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: 777th 10th Avenue

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kathleen Cromwell

Address: 140 West 46th Street

I represent: West Side Neighborhood Alliance

Address: 777 10th Avenue

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Borys Zlenko

Address: 307 West 79th Street

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jesse Zhu

Address: 307 West 79th Street

I represent: ~~_____~~

Address: ~~_____~~

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bennett Baumer

Address: _____

I represent: Housing Conservation Coordinators

Address: 777 10th Avenue

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Betsy Eichel

Address: _____

I represent: Housing Conservation Coordinators

Address: 777 9th Avenue

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kayla Rivera

Address: _____

I represent: Goddard Riverside SRD Law Project

Address: 51 West 109th Street

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maria Matalios

Address: 252 1st Avenue (Stuyvesant Town)

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ELLEN DAVISON

Address: _____

I represent: The Legal Aid Society

Address: 199 WATER ST NY NY 10038

**THE COUNCIL
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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: VINISSA MILANDO

Address: 230 East 58th Street

I represent: Ivy Terrace B+B

Address: _____

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Robert Seidel

Address: info@loraleinya.com

I represent: Nyc B+B Assoc.

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Don Matteson

Address: 15 Prospect Park West

I represent: Nyc B+B Assoc

Address: _____

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sue Fishkin

Address: _____

I represent: NYC B+B Assoc.

Address: Rugbygardens@gmail.com

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1/20/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Monique Greenwood

Address: _____

I represent: NYC B+B Assoc.

Address: monique@akwaaba.com

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms