

PROTECT OUR BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOODS

Commercial home rentals – essentially unlicensed hotels – put Baltimore City residents and families at risk. Investors are buying homes and renting them all year long to users of sites like Airbnb. This equates to operating unregulated hotels in residential areas. True home-sharing can be a benefit to our city, but unregulated commercial operators should have limits.

More than half (57%) of Airbnb hosts in Baltimore City advertise multiple listings, and more than a third (34%) of the listings are available full-time. In addition to the inherent risk associated with strangers coming and going year-round for short periods of time, these commercial property owners are pushing up rental prices, taking housing inventory from potential renters and homeowners, and making profits without paying taxes back into our communities.

WHAT'S AT STAKE:

Inflating Baltimore's Affordable Housing Crisis

- Studies have shown that across the country, commercial short-term rentals are driving up long-term rental prices.
- The average rent in Baltimore is \$1,147. In neighborhoods with a lot of short-term rentals, like Federal Hill and Fells Point, it's \$2,140.
- Baltimore already has an affordable housing crisis that disproportionately affects single mothers, teachers, emergency responders, and other vital members of the work force. We cannot afford for more Baltimore residents to be priced out of their homes.

Reducing Access to Single-Family Homes

- When commercial investors buy up single-family homes for short-term rentals, they reduce the available housing inventory. As a result, young professionals and families struggle to find places to live, while investors profit.

Risking Our Safety

- When a commercial short-term rental occupies a house in our neighborhoods, we lose a valuable opportunity for committed families and individuals to join and give back to our communities. We don't know that a one- or two-day guest will respect our properties, our neighborhoods, and our residents. Regulated hotels provide security and oversight that commercial short-term rentals do not.
- Airbnbs are not required to have commercial hospitality insurance, and they are not subject to the same fire and safety regulations as hotels, threatening the personal safety of both guests and neighbors.

Threatening True Home-Sharing

- Renting out your primary residence or a room in your house short-term can be a great way to earn money, and even enables people to buy their own homes and become neighbors. But true home-sharers are having trouble competing with the investments and resources of commercial Airbnbs.

Hurting Our Tax Base

- Commercial investors are making huge returns without paying the taxes that hotels and other hospitality businesses do. If they are going to profit from our neighborhoods, they should pay their fair share. Requiring commercial Airbnbs to pay the hotel tax would generate \$300,000 in new tax revenue for our city.



WHAT YOU CAN DO:

The Baltimore City Council needs to hear from you today. In the near future, the Council will be considering a bill that would place safety, tax, and rental time requirements on commercial property owners. Tell your Councilmember that you support regulations on short-term rentals.

3 ways you can help:

1. Email your Baltimore City Councilmember and tell them you support regulations on commercial short-term rentals at bit.ly/airbnbwatchmd.
2. Submit written testimony or testify in person at a City Council hearing by contacting us at infomd@airbnbwatch.org.
3. Share your story! Whether you are a concerned homeowner, neighbor, Airbnb consumer, or short-term rental host, we want to hear from you. Email infomd@airbnbwatch.org.

Questions? Visit airbnbwatch.org/Maryland or email infomd@airbnbwatch.org.

About AirbnbWATCH

AirbnbWATCH is a project of American Family Voices, bringing together a collection of organizations dedicated to a common goal: Protect communities and travelers by exposing commercial operators who use sites like Airbnb to run illegal hotels in residential properties under the radar and by making sure all hotel businesses play by the same rules.

THE PROBLEM:

Commercial landlords are increasingly using short-term rental sites like Airbnb to rent out multiple residential properties year-round, just like a hotel, while avoiding regulation and taxes. And while this may drive huge revenues for companies like Airbnb, unregulated hotels operated in residential properties are disruptive to communities and pose serious safety concerns for guests and neighbors.

THE SOLUTION:

We are urging state and local governments to take action to protect communities and ensure a fair travel marketplace by closing the “illegal hotel loophole” by making sure all lodging businesses are playing by the same rules.

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