

Dear Senator (or Representative) Name:

We are founding members, leaders, and active supporters of neighborhood coalitions across the state who have come together to stop efforts by short term rental companies to push a legislative agenda that poses highly destructive threats to all of our neighborhoods. In 2019, many of our members made the trip to Austin to testify against H.B. 3778 at a hearing in the House Urban Affairs Committee. The bill, sponsored by Committee Chair Angie Chen-Button, did not make it out of committee. That bill, if passed, would have stripped all cities in Texas of the power to effectively address the severe problems so often created when short-term rentals (STRs) invade residential neighborhoods. We are writing you today to reintroduce ourselves as members of a growing number of homeowner coalitions that are committed to protecting the integrity and safety of our neighborhoods and provide you with the resources and support necessary to ensure your constituents and their families are protected from the multiple issues associated with short term rentals.

Our respective coalitions are comprised of bipartisan Texans from across the State who care about one thing – protecting our cities’ authority to regulate STRs. As a united group, we believe the following:

- **The decision to regulate STRs should always be left to local communities, without state interference.** One-size-fits-all laws do not work with STRs. There are multiple examples of ordinances throughout the state that work in certain communities, that may not work in other areas of the State.
- **The safety of our community is at risk if a blanket law is passed that prohibits or impairs regulation of STRs by local authorities who will know local conditions best.** There are hundreds of examples from around the country that show how STRs pose a significant risk to the safety of our families and neighborhoods in which they reside.
- **Our private property rights are at stake.** Our homes are the single largest investment we make in our lives. Allowing strangers to come into our neighborhoods with no local laws in place to protect the homeowners residing near or around the STR is unacceptable.

That STRs inflict misery on residential neighborhoods is a fact well documented in the media: raucous parties late at night; streets choked with parked cars; garbage left out at the curb for days. More fundamentally, neighborhoods are gutted when neighbors are replaced by a revolving door of transients who do not live there and have little incentive to be good neighbors to people they will never see again. We encourage you to review these articles that showcase the rise in violence associated with STRs^{1 and 2}, how property rights and the safety of our neighborhoods are at risk because of STRs³, and a story illustrating a young Texas girl who was recently shot at an AirBNB party⁴.

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1. [Shooting, Sex Crime and Theft: Airbnb Takes Halting Steps to Protect Its Users](#)
 2. [AirBNBs IPO Warning: Unhappy Neighbors Are Fighting Back](#)
 3. [AirBNB Fights Its ‘Party House Problem.’](#)
 4. [Teen Girl Shot During House Party In Mesquite](#)

No matter what STR lobbyists may state, the truth is stated in clear, crisp and irrefutable terms by Airbnb in IPO documents filed with the SEC on November 16, 2020. Airbnb, facing civil and criminal liability for false statements, lays out at page 45 of that document the real story about its business and does so in stark, in fact terrifying, terms:

“We have no control over or ability to predict the actions of our users and other third parties, such as neighbors or invitees, either during the guest’s stay, experience, or otherwise, and therefore, we cannot guarantee the safety of our hosts, guests, and third parties. The actions of hosts, guests, and other third parties have resulted and can further result in fatalities, injuries, other bodily harm, fraud, invasion of privacy, property damage, discrimination, brand and reputational damage, which have created and could continue to create potential legal or other substantial liabilities for us. We do not verify the identity of all of our hosts and guests nor do we verify or screen third parties who may be present during a reservation made through our platform.”

Some of us are Republicans, and some of us are Democrats; however, we stand united when it comes to defending the power – in fact duty - of local governments to protect their citizens from the suffering and dangers that STRs create in residential neighborhoods. Zoning and related ordinances are a uniquely local matter that work best when crafted by local officials who know local conditions. So, cities must be left alone to exercise their zoning and regulatory powers free from State legislature interference.

We fully expect that the lobby teams for Airbnb and VRBO will once again try to peddle bills that would, as they tried in 2019, strip cities and homeowners across the Lone Star State of the powers to deal with STRs at the local level. We call upon you now on behalf of the multitude of voters across the State we represent to reject outright such patent efforts to leave neighborhoods throughout Texas subject to the horrors that Airbnb, when the chips were down, had to confess were the unavoidable consequences of its business.

It is with these collective concerns in mind that we urge you to stand with us to ensure local governments are not restricted in their ability to protect us from the safety and property rights issues associated with short term rentals. We encourage you to use our groups as a resource to help make decisions that will directly impact your constituents. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

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On behalf of Watters Crossing Representing 692 Homes

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On Behalf of Neighborhoods Are for Neighbors Coalition

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On Behalf of Neighbors for Short Term Rental Reform

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Mary Gilliland	Norma Minnis	Karen Roberts
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On Behalf of WESAYNOTOVRBO

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ON BEHALF OF SMART GROWTH COALITION

Ed Zahra

Fort Worth

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Denise Bynum	Randy Cleveland	Lloyd Colegrove
Maureen Corns	Gayle Davis	Frank Diaz
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Robin Garrison	Kristin Glass	David & Lisa Griffith
Brenda Helmer	Mike Holt	Lacey Imbert
Margaret Johnson	Kathy Kelly	Roy & Jackie Liles
Janine Lund (President, Crestwood Association)		Troy McKelroy
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Dennis & Gillian Brewer (Grapevine)

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Casey Cogburn (Grapevine)

Kevin Conroy (Frisco)

Cindy Jerabek (Frisco)

Katherine McClendon (Plano)

Andrew Muras (Grapevine)

Stacey Silverman (Grapevine)

Michael Stephenson (Grapevine)

Bert Scalzo (Flower Mound)

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