

**Presentation to City of Calgary Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services  
(SPC on CPS)  
Wednesday September 11, 2019**

Good Morning Madam Chair and Members of Council. Thank you for the opportunity to present to the Committee today in relation to the tiered licence category for Short Term Rentals in the proposed amendments to the Business Licence Bylaw 32M98.

My name is Leanne Shaw and I am the Owner Operator of my family's hotel in NE Calgary, the Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Calgary-Airport. I also serve as the Chair of the Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association Board of Directors.

It is a pleasure to be back in front of the committee on this important issue and I would like to again thank administration for their work on what is a first step in regulating short term rentals in our city. I'd also like to thank this committee and the City of Calgary for continuing to recognize the importance of this issue to our community.

I believe that the amendments to the bylaw are a good first step in regulating Short Term Rentals (STRs). It will provide a mechanism for oversight and hopefully alleviate some of the concerns about the underground rental activity.

There was some discussion this morning on the topic of guest records. We heard that there are some privacy concerns to having hosts maintain a record of who rents and ultimately stays in a Short Term Rental. We heard that one possible solution was relying on the information that Airbnb collects pertaining to the person who makes the booking. This concerns me as we know as hotels that the person who makes a booking is not always the person who ultimately stays in a room. When a guest checks into to hotel we verify the identity of the individual who is staying with us and maintain these records.

Unfortunately, there is an unsavory side to the accommodations industry and knowing who is renting a unit is just one step in being able to keep on top of this. Human trafficking and other illegal activities such as the drug trade often set up shop in the accommodation industry. In a hotel we have staff who can identify where there is potential criminal activity and take appropriate steps to notify law enforcement and work to ensure that victims of this unsavory element are identified and offered assistance. What I know in the past few years is that less and less of this activity, specifically human trafficking, is happening in my hotel and yet from conversations with the Calgary Police Service this activity still takes place in our city. I worry that it has migrated into Short Term Rentals when in the case of some of the whole home and specifically some of the commercially operated STRs the guest has no contact with the host and there is no one to question the comings and goings of more than just the renter.

On the question of taxation, specifically property tax, the point of clarification I would like to make is that it is not the home owner who is participating in true home sharing that should be subject to commercial property tax but the commercial operator who is renting out units as a business. If you are renting a room or two in your home I do not believe you should be taxed differently however if as we heard today that in some condo buildings there are as many as six out of seven units on a floor being rented out as Short Term Rentals and operated as a business they should be subject to the commercial tax rate and not the residential rate. On the City of Calgary website if you enter the value of my own hotel in the tax calculator you will see that we are taxed at a rate that is more than three times the residential rate. If the city were to collect triple the tax from all commercially operated Short Term Rentals this could go a long way to helping solve the \$60 million budget cuts that were just made. If you are operating as a business, then you should be treated as a business.

Thank you again to the Committee and Administration for their important work on this file.

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