

From: Dane Cho

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Message:

I am writing in regards to Ordinance 2019.343 regarding Short Term Rentals, specifically Section (L) which establishes owner-occupancy requirements for STRs. I am an Airbnb host who periodically rents out my own apartment in my own duplex in the VCU area. By any \*reasonable\* definition, I am an owner-occupant with permanent residence in RVA: I was raised in Richmond, my mom still lives in Richmond, I bought a home in Richmond, my job is in Richmond, all my stuff is in my home, all my mail gets sent to my home, etc... And yet even though I generally spend more time in RVA than anywhere else, by the terms in Section (L) I would have been unable to be an Airbnb host in 2019. Why? I travelled a lot. For work, and for vacation, but mostly I was away to be with my newborn son who is being raised by his mother abroad. I have spent the last year reorganizing my entire life to be able to spend as much time with him as possible. A BIG reason why I can even afford to be with him for any reasonable amount of time at all is because of Airbnb. Without the flexibility and convenience of such a platform, I fear I will have to sell or move out of my home, put my things in storage, and live essentially nomadically for the foreseeable future. Potentially I would need to leave RVA altogether depending on how such a change would affect my relationship with my employer. Along with dozens of other concerned hosts, I have signed a petition that will be submitted to the clerk today. If I can manage to take off work, I will be in attendance at the meetings on the next two Mondays discussing the ordinance. While I am, by nature, skeptical of the effectiveness of citizen action in modern American life, I am taking these steps out of plain desperation. Any advice you could provide me would be appreciated. Thank you, Dane Cho