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March 8, 2020

Richmond City Council
Executive Offices
Richmond City Hall
900 E. Broad Street
Suite 305
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Proposed Ordinance to permit short-term rentals (Ordinance No. 2019-343)

Dear Council President Newbille and members of Council:

Last week a small group of Operators and concerned Richmond City citizens were able to meet with Planning & Development Review at the request of Councilwoman Gray. I want to thank Ms. Gray for the organization of this meeting.

Over the last two months I have spoken with many of you and have done my best to understand what may be the path to legalize Short Term Rentals in Richmond. It became clear to me several things. The first, that Richmond has very wise City Council members that want to protect the City of Richmond from poorly operated Short Term Rentals. The second, that Richmond is not a monolith and that different areas of Richmond have tremendously different landscape for Short Term Rentals.

The one-size-fits-all proposal before you on March 9, 2020 will do nothing to eliminate bad actors operating STRs in Richmond. The proposal does not include an effective Enforcement and Accountability program for Operators who are acting irresponsibly. Furthermore, the proposal would effectively eliminate all good STR operators who have been active in seeking to find a way to legally exist in Richmond.

I humbly request that you do not approve the current Proposed Ordinance to permit short-term rentals (Ordinance No. 2019-343). Instead, I kindly ask you to refer this item back to Planning & Development Review. During the meeting on March 4, 2020 the Operators presented an alternative proposal to regulate STRs which will protect the Citizens of Richmond and allow STRs to be regulated more effectively. I encourage Planning & Development Review to continue to communicate with STR Operators so that a proposal can be made where all parties may coexist in the future.

Thank you!

Tyler Rackley - STR located at 1719 Hanover Ave, 23220