



Airbnb: Bad for NYC

STATEMENT FROM NEW YORK CITY HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS AGAINST AIRBNB'S NEWLY PROPOSED "HOME SHARING RULES FOR NEW YORK"

Airbnb's most recent proposal of new internal policies is nothing more than the same empty promises it has made in other cities across the country. This is clearly Airbnb's attempt to influence legislation in New York, but it is too little, too late. The new "rules" mimic the failed legislation passed in San Francisco in 2015, which essentially legalized Airbnb's illegal and harmful business model, has wreaked havoc on its permanent housing and is currently the source of litigation. After San Francisco passed the legislation promoted by Airbnb, the city soon found it to be utterly unenforceable and has since amended it. Rather than work with the city to improve enforcement, Airbnb instead sued the city of San Francisco. New York must not make the same mistake and be lured by broken promises.

New York prohibits short-term rentals in residential buildings where the leaseholder is not present – not a shared room – to protect tenants and preserve affordable housing. The "rules" that Airbnb has proposed are weak: in order to be effective, they would have to exist alongside an effective and transparent enforcement mechanism, which Airbnb has failed to provide and which does not exist independently of the company. The only way to enforce the "rules" is ostensibly through internal monitoring at Airbnb itself – a company that has failed to be accountable or transparent and to take responsibility when questioned by New York City and State elected officials on its business practices.

Further, the newly proposed policies will not work in New York because they are utterly unenforceable as has been proven in other cities. Our organizations – housing and tenants' rights groups – urge our elected officials to reject any attempt by Airbnb to legitimize their illegal business, which contributes to the loss of New York City's affordable housing stock, creates unlivable conditions for tenants living in residential buildings, and makes unsuspecting tenants susceptible to eviction. We remain committed to the fight against illegal hotels and Airbnb, and are dedicated to preserving the remaining stock of affordable housing in New York City.

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