

Craig, Sondra

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To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Short Term Rental Hearing

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To the Council members of La Crosse WI

My Wife and I are currently living in California due to a US Military transfer and job opportunity. My wife Nicole is originally from La Crosse and her family all live there. We decided to purchase a home in La Crosse to stay at while visiting family and friends which we do frequently. We registered with the state of WI and received our license to operate a short-term rental while we aren't in town to offset the cost of our mortgage. We have hired a cleaner, a landscape team and a snow removal company to maintain the property to our standard and to provide our guests with the best possible experience for their stay.

La Crosse has so many events throughout the year that we are often booked for fish derbies, University graduations, Weddings and family events like thanksgiving and reunions. In fact, our neighbors Joe Leinfelder and his wife asked us for a discount so they could rent our home for a family wedding that was happening this past year. We gave them a neighbor discount for their event not knowing after their stay they would be the people pushing the city of La Crosse to regulate what we can or can not do with our home. They have gone so far as to yell and threaten our guests repeatedly and recently complained on a local radio broadcast with false accusations. We actually had to get the authorities involved when they harassed our guests repeatedly which led to our first unpleasant review from our guests. We were also advised by the police to block them from messaging/calling us and even file a civil suit against them. The other neighbors warned us to watch out for these neighbors when I initially spoke to everyone in the neighborhood about using our home as a short-term rental. My neighbors (Joe and Sue Leinfelder) behavior is puzzling considering they were more than happy to rent from us in the past.

In closing, I believe that STRs (Short Term Rentals) in La Crosse add to the community giving family members a more family friendly environment to hold their events and get together when hotels are not an option or less personal in some cases. I believe small businesses benefit greatly when there are more available places for visitors to stay. The more the city of La Crosse can accommodate visitors to our great city the more revenue restaurants and festivals will generate. Not to mention the STR owners' maintenance businesses like snow removal, cleaning crews and landscaping. STR owners want to maintain their properties to attract renters, which is also a positive for neighborhoods and La Crosse as a whole. There are already high standards and regulations that STR owners are held to from the different websites like Airbnb and VRBO. If an STR owner does not maintain a high rating they risk both Airbnb and VRBO removing that home from their websites.

Please reconsider some of the proposed regulations. Most people who rent do so over the weekends therefore, instilling a six-day minimum stay would be detrimental to STRs. Not considering a grandfathering arrangement would be unfair to those of us that are doing the right thing and maintaining our investment with pride. Not allowing people like this Veteran and my family to maintain the property from where I am with some help from family in the local area would be devastating. When I decided to invest in our La Crosse home, I did so knowing I was investing in a community that I love in hopes that when my family and I weren't able to stay there we could share this special place with others. It feels like our future plans to return to La Crosse are in jeopardy due to one neighbor and their opinion.

Please take this letter into consideration when determining your decisions on short term rentals.

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La Crosse home owner
Short term rental manager
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