



## HOSPITALITY SANTA BARBARA

14 November 2016

The Honorable Peter Adam, Chair  
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Room 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

### **Re: Short Term Rentals in Santa Barbara County**

Chairman Adam:

On behalf of the southern Santa Barbara County hospitality industry, I am writing to express our concerns regarding the Short Term Rental ordinance that is being proposed by planning staff and is set for hearing before the Board on Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>.

The proposed ordinance seeks to curtail one of the emerging sectors in the hospitality industry ... short term rental of residential properties. Studies continue to show an increase in the desire by the traveling public to have the option of staying in short term rental housing when away from home on vacation.

While we understand the concern raised by these short term rentals, with neighbors uneasy about the lodging businesses being run in their communities and hotels wanting to ensure that they operate under similar regulations, we believe there is an answer that is more nuanced and frankly fairer than the option being proposed by County staff.

Tourism is vital to Santa Barbara County through all of the tax revenues and jobs that this industry creates. As short term rentals are a component of this industry, Santa Barbara County must step forward to engage on a path toward regulation that allows these businesses to legally operate rather than the virtual outright ban that is being proposed. Examples from a number of jurisdictions make it clear that such a regulatory program is possible.

We believe that the County should call together a task force of interests on this topic, and direct the group to return with a regulatory system that will ensure the short term rental industry can continue to operate while meeting the concerns of neighbors and like businesses. The City of Goleta has a regulatory system in place that we might learn from, but there are a number of others from which to draw ideas.

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We appreciate the time and effort that County staff has invested in this issue, but we believe the answer they have come up with leaves legitimate businesses in the cold, takes away an important travel option for visitors, and will take revenue away from the County at a time it is desperately needed. It may also have a negative impact on the broader hospitality industry as visitors seek other destinations where STRs are allowed, meaning less income for restaurants, retail and visitor services.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Paul Bullock, President  
Hospitality Santa Barbara