

Thank you Mayor Hill and the Board for allowing me to speak this morning. My name is AM. I'm from Grapevine and one of the founders of the TX Neighborhood Coalition that now includes 1000's of homeowners from more than a dozen cities across NTX and the state.

Our mission is two-fold: (1) Educate the public and politicians on the negative effects of Short-term rentals, known as STRs, in residential neighborhoods and (2) support local control and Oppose state regulations that force STRs on local communities by stripping cities of their rights to zone and regulate STRs.

My own experience began a year ago when my family woke one morning to the nightmare of finding a short term vacation rental hotel as our new next door neighbor.

Here's our nightmare: The STR that opened behind us, a small 3BR house, advertised for 8 beds and 14 people, changing out every 2-3 days. Basically, a hotel pool, lights and party deck within 20 ft of our back door. Noise, bachelor parties up to 9 hrs every day – morning/noon/night. In 6 mos this single STR brought over 500 transient vacationers with unknown criminal or sexual predator backgrounds into our 400 person neighborhood. And unfortunately I've since come to learn that many stories are much worse than ours.

Last year, many neighborhoods in GV banded together, worked with the City, who had been monitoring STRs for awhile, and in Sept the City Council reaffirmed their existing zoning restrictions and clarified their ban on STRs.

We knew the fight wasn't over and so we began working with our state reps and other cities, starting with Arlington, and so began our TX Neighborhood Coalition.

Now again this year, just like in 2017, bills have been introduced in the TX House and Senate that eliminate the cities' power to deal with STRs – thereby forcing these hotels into our residential areas that undermine the peace, security and property values of our neighborhoods and the families who live there.

So why be concerned? Talking points are in front of you, but here are 3 main reasons:

First, these bills are anti-city. They eliminate cities' rights to zone and restrict STR businesses, leading to a slippery slope, even more fearful in this sharing economy. Cities will also spend more of their precious time and resources on code violations, noise complaints and police actions because short-term vacationers don't share long-term commitments to the neighborhood.

Second, these bills are anti-neighborhood and anti-family as they hollow-out our cities, our neighborhoods and our schools. Residents by large margins don't want STRs in their neighborhoods. A WFAA TV poll had it at 84%. This is the ultimate 'not in my backyard' issue as I can tell you from my experience of living next to an STR party house. I challenge each of you to walk your streets with a single question, "Do you want to live next door to an STR vacation house?"

The problem is that most STRs are unsupervised absentee-run hotels. That's why the U.S. Senate has directed the Attorney-General to develop "a report detailing the impact of short-term rentals and the sharing economy upon human trafficking and child sexual exploitation."

Third, the economics of STRs are great for Airbnb and a few STR investors, but horrible for cities and citizens. The positive economics of STRs are false because they fail to consider full costs and impacts. A Jan 2019 study by the Economic Policy Institute in DC concluded, there is "no reason for local policymakers to change local regulations and tax structures to benefit Airbnb" as economic costs likely outweigh the benefits.

And I could go on, but I'm not here to berate Airbnb or ban it from cities, but I am here to tell you that residents are 'up in arms' in TX, just like they are around the country and around the world.

We are fighting for local control since this is local problem. One size does not fit all— what works for SL or GV is different than what might work best for Arlington, or Lubbock or Galveston.

We are fighting to support neighborhoods, which are the lifeblood of our cities.
We are fighting to support families, which are the lifeblood of our neighborhoods.

We are grass roots - not funded by Silicon Valley Giants. We are moms, dads and families fighting to ensure our neighborhoods remain safe, peaceful and secure.

We are fighting to help you, the local well-managed cities, continue doing what's best for managing and protecting your local community.

It really comes down to a simple question: do you want to live next to an STR vacation hotel? Please pass on our information and ask those interested to join our cause. We've got 2 mos left to fight these bills. Cities - Help us help you.

Thank you.