

To Whom It May Concern,

I am the mother of five-year-old twins, a professor of economics, and an airbnb host.

I am hosting my childhood home on airbnb. The nine-acre property (in Wishon, CA) is surrounded by U.S. Forestry land. It is one mile from Bass Lake and 24 miles from Yosemite National Park. The property has only been sold once in the past 50 years. The original owner worked at the North Fork Mill and hand-built two cabins in the 1940s. He lived in the small cabin while building the larger cabin. My parents spent many years upgrading the homes and landscaping the property.

My mother passed away in 2012, at the age of 64. She dearly loved the property and wanted her grandchildren to enjoy it. While battling ovarian cancer, Mom created a resting place for her ashes. In 2012, I purchased my own home in Oak Park, CA --close to my work at Cal State Northridge. I quickly recognized that I could not sustain the financial burden of keeping my childhood home while raising young twins in their new home. This led me to join airbnb.

I was frankly terrified at the idea of strangers in my Mother's home. Could they get hurt? Would they take things? Would they destroy it? I did my best to bring the property up to health and safety codes -- installing a new septic system, strapping down water heaters, enclosing open decks, etc. I filed for a business license in Madera County and made sure to collect 11% TOT for every guests' stay. I hired my Mom's best friends (who live next door and have a business to report these earnings) to maintain the property.

Then something happened that I could have NEVER anticipated! People loved coming to the property! They did not take anything from the house. They did not break anything! And the gratitude expressed in guest's reviews sound as though they stayed for free. I honestly expected a quick thank you. After all, they are *paying* to stay at the property.

But something more has happened. The property is very special --in its solitude and handcrafted simplicity. Many guests tell me that it reminds

them of their parent's or grandparent's homes. Guests come with their families to celebrate birthdays, weddings, and anniversaries. They come to rest after an illness or to bury the ashes of a beloved pet in the mountains. My guests share their stories with me. It gives me so much joy to know that they are happy there and that I can keep my childhood home for ***all of us*** to enjoy!!!

Platforms like airbnb, Flipkey/TripAdvisor, or VRBO/Homeaway create a win-win --for my guests, for my family, for Madera County, and for my partners who are paid to maintain the property.

From an economic standpoint, peer-to-peer platforms, like airbnb, increase competition by raising the number of suppliers. This puts downward pressure on price that benefits consumers. Additionally, peer-to-peer platforms empower individuals to earn much-needed income in an environment of stagnant wages and increasing income inequality. Airbnb's business model highlights many great things about this country: innovation, entrepreneurship, and community.

Please consider my story in your deliberations.

Sincerely,

Leah E. Marcal
Owner of Idyllic Mountain Retreat
Professor of Economics at Cal State Northridge