

Dear Committee,

Airbnb has turned out to be a remarkable and important experience for my family. People come here from as close as the nearest town and as far as Paris, Singapore, Ireland, Africa and all over the world. We never would have met if not for sharing our home through Airbnb. Visitors want a base to visit San Francisco and the Bay Area. They visit family, attend weddings, see the phenomenal National and State parks close to us; and the Napa wine country less than an hour away. Hotel accommodations in the Bay Area are quite pricey, and the lower rates in sharing makes it possible to visit affordably in an otherwise unaffordable area of California for many travelers, especially families.

The best benefit is this is providing income for us in our retirement. My husband's pension just covers our mortgage. All our living expenses would have to come from our Social Security. We never expected to have such high insurance and utility bills when we planned our retirement. It would be an austere life without our Airbnb supplement. The extra money makes it possible to have real security, to pay our bills and taxes. Otherwise we would not be able to afford to live here any longer, our home since 1970.

The next best benefit is our guests meet and spend time with us at our home, giving them an experience with this place and people they would not otherwise meet. For us it brings wonderful people to people connections we would otherwise not ever have. We feel we represent our community to travelers, and want them to take away a true experience of our home. The impact on our neighbors is nil, we have off street parking, guests are quiet. It has worked out better than we imagined, I don't know how we would manage without it.

Marsha Heckman