

**Written Submission To The Bills Committee on Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation (Amendment) Bill 2018:-**

To Whom It May Concern,

I take a personal stance and write to strongly discourage the amendment bill of the Hotel & Guest House Accommodation Ordinance.

As technology, sharing economies and the “Instagram” age drives our world into the future, millennials around the world become more nomadic where it is a culture to live & work in a city that is not “home.” As an innovation and financial hub, Hong Kong naturally becomes one of the most attractive places to live & work for our millennial digital nomads who shape the next generation’s work force. While Hong Kong is the most expensive cities in the world, accommodation becomes the #1 barrier that all travelers have to solve. By passing the amendment, we are increasing the barriers of new accommodation supply which further increases the difficulty of living & working in Hong Kong for the next generation’s talent. Home sharing is a very clever way to increase utilization of existing units to welcome travelers to Hong Kong.

Why not embrace innovation and make home sharing safe together with the major platform operators instead of suppressing it?

**Some Opinions:-**

- 1.) Home sharing is a smart use of under utilized accommodation supply during high travel season to make our city more accessible and affordable to millennial travelers – our future workforce.
- 2.) Security, disturbance and lack of professionalism of illegal hoteliers are valid concerns raised by our community. However, the solutions of prosecuting hosts and making guesthouse licenses more difficult to obtain does not solve these problems directly because these problems can equally take place from licensed hotels. The real solution to these problems is to embrace opinion #1 above and work with the major home sharing platform to promote a better community of quality hosts and travelers with good reviews.
- 3.) Hygiene, building & fire safety are also valid concerns raised by our community. But not necessarily all homes are unsafe for home sharing. If the occupant is a guest (as opposed to the original homeowner) obviously the building’s structure, fire safety and hygiene has no relevance to safety yet the bill proposes to increase the difficulty of obtaining a guesthouse license.

Are we really identifying the problems as real problems and finding real solutions to them? In my opinion the solutions that we are proposing suppresses innovation and only protects the wallets of traditional hoteliers who chooses not to embrace technology. Prosecuting the great hosts who have hundreds of awesome reviews does not necessarily make our community any safer or more accessible to global talent.

I strongly hope that The Bills Committee reconsiders the amendment.

Best Wishes,

Aaron Lee