

Dear LEGCO Councillors of the Bills Committee, Home Affairs Bureau and the general public,

As a member of a global community which has enjoyed and been greatly benefited by the existence of homesharing/homestay lodging, I am devastated to hear of Hong Kong, my home town, which has long been known for being the world leading city, decided to take a step backward against the global trend of innovation and inclusivity. Together with the rest of my local and global community, the latest amendment bill on the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (HAGAO) appears very much to be a surprise rather than any sort of improvement encompassing the open arms towards global trend and innovation the government has once depicted itself for.

Despite all disappointment, I want to compliment the LEGCO for taking the time to review this dated ordinance in matter. The HAGAO is an ordinance that was first drafted well over 30 years ago, and it is needless to address that the world has been sprinting fast ahead with the wide adaptation of world wide web where innovative breakthrough took place to enable more safe and reliable transactions to happen, and the proper nurturing of the sharing economy, with homestay lodging being a key part of that. Well over 5 million places in 81,000 cities across 191 countries, big and small and include a lot of people within my own network, managed to welcome new visitors and friends in their own beautiful and unique places while getting a fair share of the time spent on ensuring a safe, pleasant and the best stay experience through a well assisted and managed onboarding, verification and review process.

I strongly stand by the idea for homestay lodging to be properly regulated and be compliant with a reasonable standard, and I am utterly grateful that the government is taking the time to address it after various groups actively approaching with ideas. It is disappointing though to see from the amendment bill that we are only moving inside a tighter circle now without looking at the bigger antelope in terms of stepping forward, truly realizing the acceptance of more innovation in the city. The current ordinance addressed two ends of a spectrum, scaled hotels of various sizes and rundown guesthouses that is simply not even presentable to any of our tourists. The ask is simple here, homestay lodging is simply different from Hotels or Guesthouses, it is here to stay, and it needs proper addressing - homestay lodging is not a scaled up hotel, homestay lodging is not a guesthouse.

I want to thank you again for time and consideration of Councillors, the Committee, the Home Affairs Bureau and the general public.

Yours sincerely,

Chan Ka Yu

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