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April 6, 2010

Alderman Vi Daley
43rd Ward
735 W. Wrightwood
Chicago, IL 60614

Dear Alderman Daley,

I am writing to reiterate the opposition of the Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce (LPCC) with you in regards to an ordinance currently being debated in Chicago's City Council. The Vacation Rental Ordinance, which was introduced in the Fall of 2009 and seemed to quickly disappear thereafter, has returned and would not only limit Chicago's reputation as an international destination, but also put a key segment of the City's tourism industry in serious financial jeopardy.

I understand that a key City of Chicago concern over these businesses is enforcement and safety. While we can appreciate that, and encourage all businesses to follow the letter of the law, placing a \$500 per unit tax on these units would not only cost the city part of its reputation, but it will also cost the city jobs.

The Chicago Vacation Rental Owners Association (CVROA) is a key element of the tourism industry in the City and a respected business organization dedicated to providing quality, safe and legal establishments. As we discussed last Fall, the LPCC believes that:

- Businesses operating these unique rental units to tourists are both an asset to, and a marketing tool of, Chicago's vibrant neighborhoods that are often lacking in adequate hotel rooms; and
- High-quality, vacation rental-style homes are a respected and often sought after component of Chicago's tourism business and lodging portfolio that draws a unique visitor to our City; and
- The CVROA is an organized group of small business owners who 1) pay and enforce member payment of taxes 2) follow and enforce member following of existing regulations, and 3) has only one member owning a property of more than four (4) units; and
- Members of the CVROA have never been cited for a single insurance claim, health, or safety issue. There have been no complaints to the City by their guests or neighbors.

This issue speaks to the businesses operating Vacation Rental units, their employees and the shops, restaurants and entertainment venues in the neighborhood that benefit from out of town guests. With an additional \$500 per unit tax, as well as specialized licensing, the fact of the matter is that businesses will close, and people will lose their jobs. Now is not the time to jeopardize the well-being of the tourism industry and its diverse accommodations.

Please feel free to contact me directly at (773) 880-5200 for additional discussion as you deem necessary. Thank you for your consideration of this matter and your continued commitment to making Chicago one of the world's premiere tourist destinations.

Sincerely,



Kim Schilf, IOM, ACE
President and CEO

CC: Alderman Scott Waguespack (32nd)