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November 24, 2009

Alderman Brendan Reilly
42nd Ward
325 W. Huron, Suite 510
Chicago, IL 60654

Dear Alderman Reilly,

I am writing to share 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 ordinance, which you introduced along with Alderman Edward Burke (14th) 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. The culture of balancing budgets and other disputes on the backs of small business owners in Chicago has become a detriment to the city and its residents.

The proposed "vacation rental" tax of \$500 per unit would add a further tax to the businesses affected during an economic period in Chicago that is less than favorable to small business owners. With added taxes, many of the businesses under this vacation rental tax will inevitably have to close.

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. 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.

Given this record of operations extending back 25 years, we do not see the need for regulation or licensing by the City beyond that already provided by the Landlords and Tenants ordinance and Chicago's building codes.

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: Dorothy Coyle, Chicago Office of Tourism
Alderman Vi Daley (43rd)
Alderman Scott Waguespack (32nd)