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From: Richard Morton
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Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Economics and Industry Standing Committee

Legislative Assembly of Western Australia

Parliament House

4 Harvest Terrace

WEST PERTH WA 6005

20th May 2019

Dear Committee members,

Personal Submission into Short Term Accommodation Government Inquiry

Thank you for providing the opportunity to provide a submission into the Committee's inquiry into Short Term Accommodation in Western Australia. I would ask that you consider the comments below from an individual who has, in a minor way, experienced guests through, the air BNB app. I would ask that my name and address be kept private because of some of the personal situations mentioned here. If this is not possible then I would like to withdraw the submission.

I am a sixty year old man and live with my 67 year old wife in Rockingham. Over the years I have run several businesses and employed many people but sadly because of ill health and the economic downturn, we lost everything including our home and all our superannuation. The home we live in now is one that my son has the mortgage on but we share the costs in a three way split because he would be unable to manage on his own due to a poorly paid job.

For income I rely on disability support and my wife a state pension supplemented by operating as a school crossing traffic warden for 10 hours a week.

Earlier this year my son lost his job and consequently we were put into a position of not being able to meet our obligations and although the bank was very helpful and suspended payments on the mortgage and my son got two part time positions we were within 2 weeks of losing our home in April 2019. As a last ditched attempt we looked and finding someone to move into a spare room but could not find any one so we tried air bnb.

We let the room for between \$37 and \$49 a day and have let the room for 25 different days over the past three months. This income has meant that we managed to keep the payments up on the

mortgage and have slowly been able to pay off the rates arrears and other bills such as electricity and telephone.

As a businessman I understand the worries and concerns that owners of registered Bed and Breakfasts and other short term accommodation would be concerned about the effect on their income however these fears are not as great as imagined. I have asked those staying with us why they chose Airbnb rather than other accommodation and what would they do if this option was not available.

The reasons given were varied and I give a few here

- 1 This person had a 1 day job in Rockingham and lives in Wanneroo and said that if Airbnb was not here he would do the 12 hour shift and then drive home as any more expensive accommodation would make the job unviable.
- 2 This person was up from the country and had five days work in Kwinana and again said he would not take the job if he could not get Airbnb
- 3 A young couple from Germany said they had felt unsafe in their back packers accommodation so looked for something else and would have gone home early had Airbnb not been there.
- 4 We have had three people who hav worked at Rockingham hospital on training from various other cities and again they have said that Airbnb allowed them to take these posts
- 5 A Chinese couple said that if Airbnb was not here the would not have come to Perth for their break
- 6 Another couple from Malaysia said that Airbnb meant they cold visit more attractions.

Finally all of these people went out to eat in local restaurants and cafes and spent money on other facilities.

In closing I would like to say that without Airbnb we would be close to being homeless after a life time of working and employing people throughout my working life and without wishing to sound dramatic my recent operation in hospital could have had a more sinister conclusion

Yours faithfully

Rchard Morton