

**Testimony of Laura Chadwick on behalf of  
the Travel Technology Association (Travel Tech)  
Before the Pennsylvania House Committee on Tourism, Recreation and Economic  
Development  
Regarding House Bill 2303 (Short-Term Rentals)**

Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 2303.

My name is Laura Chadwick, and I serve as President & CEO of the Travel Technology Association (“Travel Tech”). Travel Tech is the voice of the travel technology industry, advocating for public policies that promote transparency, competition, and consumer choice. For over 25 years, Travel Tech has consistently advanced these values.

Our members include Online Travel Agencies, metasearch engines, short-term rental platforms, travel management companies, global distribution systems, and a growing number of early-stage travel tech startups. Many of our consumer-facing members are marketplace platforms that connect travel service suppliers and would-be travelers online, facilitating information sharing and e-commerce. In the travel industry, suppliers such as hotels, car rental companies, and short-term rental owner/operators choose to provide information about their offerings on our members’ platforms. Millions of consumers worldwide visit these sites to easily research travel options, compare offerings, and book services. It is on these platforms where travel service providers directly compete—helping to keep travel more affordable and accessible for everyday Americans.

The services that Travel Tech member companies provide are not limited to tourists, but importantly, they also extend to homeowners and state and local economies. In 2024, Travel Tech member company Airbnb alone generated \$1.8 billion in economic contribution to Pennsylvania's GDP, supporting 22,300 jobs and \$501 million in host earnings. Nearly 9 million guest nights were recorded in the state.

Behind these numbers are real Pennsylvanians: the average U.S. short-term rental host earns approximately \$14,000 to \$15,000 per year from hosting. For most, this is supplemental income that helps cover a mortgage, a medical bill, or rising gas costs. Doing so is a highly-effective way to address ongoing affordability concerns plaguing Pennsylvanians and Americans across the country.

Over 60 percent of hosts rent out their primary residence. The overwhelming majority, more than 95 percent of hosts, operate three or fewer listings. This is not a large commercial real estate industry; it is a network of individual Pennsylvania homeowners sharing their homes.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on HB 2303 as well as for this committee’s leadership on commissioning the Joint State Government Commission’s recent study on the short-term rental market. Most of my remarks will be based on the study’s findings compared to the bill at hand.

## **I. Areas of Alignment**

Broadly, House Bill 2303 reflects several principles that Travel Tech supports.

First, the bill recognizes that not all short-term rentals are the same. The distinction between homestays, small operators, and larger commercial operators is critical.

Second, the bill preserves local zoning authority.

Third, the bill seeks to improve tax compliance and transparency.

These are constructive foundations. However, HB 2303, as drafted, goes significantly beyond the framework recommended by the Commonwealth's own study and risks creating unintended consequences.

## **II. The Bill Moves Beyond “Minimum Guidelines” to a Statewide Regulatory Regime**

The Joint State Government Commission recommended that the Commonwealth establish clear definitions and **minimum guidelines** for municipalities, because, as the report states, “Local zoning officials and elected officials have a better understanding of the nuances of each area within their jurisdictions and are more sensitive to the needs of their communities.”

House Bill 2303 instead establishes a comprehensive statewide regulatory system governing permitting, operations, data reporting, safety requirements, and enforcement. This risks replacing a flexible, locally tailored framework with a uniform system that may not reflect the realities of Pennsylvania's diverse communities.

While the bill preserves zoning authority, it establishes detailed statewide requirements for how short-term rentals must operate—creating a system in which local governments retain authority over *where* STRs may operate, but the state dictates *how* they must operate.

## **III. Economic Impacts Should Be Considered Alongside Policy Goals**

The Commission's report recognizes that short-term rentals play a meaningful role in supporting Pennsylvania's tourism economy, generating tax revenue, and providing income opportunities for residents.

At the same time, House Bill 2303 layers significant compliance costs onto an industry the report identifies as economically beneficial—without clearly calibrating those costs to demonstrated harms. As policymakers consider new regulatory frameworks, it is important to ensure that compliance costs and operational constraints do not unintentionally reduce supply, limit consumer choice, or impact local economies—particularly in regions that rely on tourism.

#### **IV. Regulatory Burdens Should Be Proportionate to Scale**

The Commission's report cautions that requirements appropriate for large, commercial operators may be excessive for small or occasional hosts.

While House Bill 2303 adopts a tiered framework, it still subjects all categories—including homestays—to a statewide permitting and compliance system that may be disproportionate to their level of activity.

#### **V. Data Collection and Platform Obligations Should Be Carefully Scoped**

The bill includes robust provisions related to data reporting and platform accountability. While Travel Tech supports reasonable data-sharing for tax compliance, the breadth of these requirements creates a complex compliance environment that should be more narrowly tailored.

#### **Conclusion**

Travel Tech appreciates the Committee's leadership on this issue. Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be pleased to answer any questions.