



October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
Executive Committee

## Deputation: Impact of Short-term Rentals on the Housing Market

Joeita Gupta (tenant hotline worker), Federation of Metro Tenants Associations

Dear Members of the Executive Committee,

The tenant hotline answers over 10,000 calls annually. We are therefore in a good position to assess emerging trends. We have received inquiries from callers which either relate directly to short-term rental housing or where callers have expressed concern about the possibility that their landlords are engaging in the practice.

Direct Inquiries- three case studies:

1) A woman who was working full-time as a cook and also going to school part-time called the hotline with several questions relating to her landlord's conduct. She rented a room in a house which was apparently used as a rooming house. The landlord did not live on the premises. She raised concerns about health and safety violations, fire code violations, privacy and harassment. But she was particularly concerned about the landlord's ongoing practice of renting out vacant rooms on a short-term basis using Airbnb. She expressed fear that she came home late every night to find a stranger, often an unknown man, in their shared common space such as a kitchen. She constantly feared for her safety and was deeply concerned about the possibility of theft, violence and sexual assault.

2) A father of two school-age children called the hotline in considerable distress because their family was facing an eviction for the landlord's own use. The caller was convinced that their landlord was acting in bad faith, intending to evict the family of long-term tenants and get into the business of short-term rentals. The caller noted that the landlord could likely make more money renting out their unit using a service like Airbnb and could get out of following municipal Property Standards bylaws. When queried about why the caller was so certain about the landlord's intended plans, he noted that the landlord owned several condo units in the same complex and rented out most of those using Airbnb.

3) A third tenant, fed up with the state of disrepair of her unit and the ongoing harassment from the landlord, did not challenge the eviction notice for landlord's own use, which claimed that the landlord's son planned on moving in. The tenant moved out but that was not the last she heard from her landlord. Caught up in the zeal of having an empty unit to rent out using Airbnb, the landlord contacted the caller (now a former tenant) to ask for help with advertising the apartment the caller had just vacated using Airbnb.

Making the links- broader considerations: