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UNIFOR
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Jerry Dias
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National Secretary-Treasurer
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June 16, 2017

Attention: Jennifer Forkes exc@toronto.ca

Re: EX26.3 Proposed Regulations for Short-term Rentals For Consultation

Dear Mayor John Tory and members of the Executive Committee,

Unifor is Canada's largest union in the private sector, representing more than 315,000 workers, including more than 18,000 women and men working in the hospitality sector across the country.

Airbnb and other digital platform enterprises have been the subject of intense scrutiny and debate at the municipal, provincial and federal level. While these platforms may make a service easier to access and/or more affordable, these types of businesses can often have disruptive consequences to more established business models. Sometimes these companies have unintentionally undermined existing government regulations, and can impact the housing market.

In the short-term rental market, companies like Airbnb have allowed ordinary families to benefit from sharing their homes and earn supplemental income and increased options for affordable travel. However, it is important to regulate short term rentals to ensure the positive influences of this are encouraged, while discouraging any negative consequences.

That is why I was pleased to see Airbnb lead the way in this sector with a number of important initiatives, such as pledging support for the \$15 minimum wage in the US, and advancing an economic empowerment agenda globally. In addition, we understand that Airbnb and a significant number of its hosts have agreed to open up their homes for free to assist refugees by partnering with a number of Canadian refugee settlement agencies.

Also we were pleased to see that Airbnb in Canada has worked closely with the city of Toronto to adopt new regulations. They are seeking a fair approach to regulate short-term rentals in the city which hopefully once adopted could be a model for other cities in Canada. Airbnb has also made it clear that they support paying hotel and tourist taxes in the city. It is my hope that Toronto City Council will ensure the final regulations strike the right balance.

Airbnb is setting an example for a path forward that couples the potential of the digital economy with the reality of working people across the country, and has demonstrated its willingness to operate in a manner consistent with the goals of broader society.

Because of Airbnb's progressive approach, Unifor is exploring ways to work together with them. We will continue to explore areas of mutual interest to improve the public good, and if possible work towards a national partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jerry Dias".

JERRY DIAS
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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