

Sample Letter to Your State Senator or Representatives

Instructions:

- *Put on your B&B stationary*
- *Separate letter to your Senator and Representative*
- *To find your Legislator visit:*
<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/>

Dear Senator or Representative [insert name]:

In July 2016, Airbnb and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania announced that a voluntary compliance agreement (VCA) had been reached by which Airbnb would collect and remit the Commonwealth's six percent Hotel Occupancy Tax on behalf of in-state Airbnb hosts. According to a blog post from the Pennsylvania Governor's Office, the state's Revenue Secretary noted that the "agreement will generate nearly \$1 million in new revenue for the Commonwealth to help fund vital state services."

Unfortunately, the amount of estimated tax revenue from the collection agreement between Airbnb and the Commonwealth just doesn't add up. According to publicly available market data, nearly \$4 million in Hotel Occupancy Tax is legally owed on Pennsylvania Airbnb rentals—almost four times the amount that Airbnb and the Department of Revenue pledged the agreement would generate. This is money that the state is losing out on that could be used for important social services such as education, public health and safety or to support statewide tourism marketing.

As the owner of [insert B&B name] located in [insert name of town], PA for more than [insert number of years you have operated your B&B] years, I pay the same Hotel Occupancy Tax that Airbnb has agreed to collect and remit. Each month, I submit the necessary information to the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue on the income I have earned from renting out my guest rooms. I pay the proper and legally-owed amount of occupancy tax to the Commonwealth as well as the local lodging tax to my County Treasurer.

All property owners renting out their property for less than 30 days should be held to this same standard under the law—even if they rely on a third-party booking site, such as Airbnb, VRBO, HomeAway, etc. to facilitate this tax collection and remittance process. No exemptions should be granted to those properties with a limited number of room nights sold annually.

I urge you to dig deeply to find the source of this discrepancy, and to hold giant companies like Airbnb to the same standards bed and breakfast owners, like myself, have complied with for years.

Sincerely,

[insert your first and last name]