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June 19, 2017

**Mayor Eddie DeLoach
City of Savannah
P.O. Box 1027
2 East Bay St.
Savannah, GA 31401**

Dear Mayor DeLoach,

I am writing to oppose the resolution imposing a temporary stay on short-term-rental registrations.

Savannah is an attractive vacation destination because of its historic character and great urbanism. According to the Savannah Area Chamber, tourism has been steadily increasing over the past few years, and this trend is expected to continue.

As Savannah continues to surge in its growth and economic activity, housing values will continue to rise and decisions will have to be made. Freezing residents' ability to use their own properties flexibly will only accelerate that process, not halt it.

Indeed, to the extent that rising home values are a public-policy concern, short-term rentals can serve as a solution that allows people to adjust how they use their own properties in immediate response to the conditions they experience. Savannah's strong market and lodging demand means that it enjoys greater potential than most other cities to help people afford to stay in their homes and in their neighborhoods. The ability to rent a room or an apartment, even just a few times a year, might be enough for some to avoid having to leave their homes and communities.

I am the Southeast regional director for the R Street Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public-policy research organization. Earlier this year, we published a study titled "[Accessory Dwelling Units: A flexible free-market housing solution](#)." Its author, Jonathan Coppage, makes the case that the ability to use accessory dwelling units as short-term rentals can be a crucial tool for both renters and owners to navigate periods of uncertainty.

Savannah already has among the strictest regulations governing short-term rentals. They are only allowed in limited areas of the city, require an expensive annual permit and must comply with other rules.

Reasonable regulations that protect renters, property owners and the community can and should be discussed in the open without slamming the gate on people's ability to use their properties within the strict limits already imposed by the city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian R. Cámara", with a stylized flourish underneath.

Christian R. Cámara
Southeastern Regional Director
R Street Institute