Hello,

My name is Sylvie Bahati. For my entire life I've watched my mother host visitors in our home from all around the world. Even when we were refugees ourselves it did not stop my mother from hosting people. I remember saying that one day, when I grow up , I would love to be a great host like my mother.

Since we arrived in Winnipeg, nine years ago as former refugees from DR Congo Uganda, all I wanted was an opportunity to start a business that I could feel passionate about.

When I read about how council has been fighting so hard to stop short term rentals in Winnipeg, I can't help but wonder…why? Aren't we friendly Manitoba, aren't we the first ones to welcome refugees? Why the sudden change? Hosting visitors is being part of the economic growth of our city?

I have worked long hours and physically hard as a Health Care Aide in Winnipeg for the past five years. All of this effort went in because more than anything, I wanted to give back. I am passionate about helping others.

I also wanted to be part of the economy contributing to the growth of Manitoba. I enjoy harnessing my passion of hospitality and my strong desire to give back with giving people a great experience here in friendly Manitoba.

I just signed up to collect GST. I feel it is my duty since it fuels the economic growth of my home city.

It is heartbreaking to me that a couple of councillors want to stop short term rental in Winnipeg. Why Winnipeg? Why friendly Manitoba? Why now?

I would like to know if you have a suggestion for what we host will do if you stop us from earning our income through Short Term Rentals? Will there be any compensation for every month of lost income due to your decision to cut off our occupation?

This beautiful business is way more than just earning an income for me. This was what I had set my sights on doing since I was a child!

It is my opinion that this primary residence restriction and capping the number of days rented would be a huge mistake for Winnipeg and a loss for our visitors who want to visit friendly Manitoba! Please consider people like me who would be negatively impacted by your decision.

Sylvie N Bahati

Proud Black Entrepreneur/Refugee/Winnipeg Citizen

Fort Garry