



November 14, 2016

Council Records Access Officer Danielle Barbato  
The Council  
The City of New York  
Office of the General Counsel  
250 Broadway, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007  
[dbarbato@council.nyc.gov](mailto:dbarbato@council.nyc.gov)

**Via email and U.S. mail**

**RE: Freedom of Information Law Request**

Dear Ms. Barbato:

My name is Evlondo Cooper, and I am a Senior Fellow with Checks and Balances Project, a government and industry watchdog blog. Pursuant to the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL),<sup>1</sup> I request documents related to Hon. Helen Rosenthal's travel outside New York City concerning short-term rental regulation.

This request covers all records created by Council Member Rosenthal assumed office January 1, 2014, which pertaining to short-term rental regulation.

### **Background**

As reported in the *Toronto Star*, Rosenthal recently travelled to Toronto to "speak to the city's executive committee about how and why municipalities should regulate short-term rentals."<sup>2</sup> Council Member Rosenthal's attendance was reportedly at the invitation of "Fairbnb," a coalition led by the hotel industry and hotel workers' union which has been pushing Toronto to restrict short term rentals.<sup>3</sup>

### **Time Period**

This request seeks records created and/or received by Ms. Rosenthal during the following period:

- January 1, 2014 through Today.

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<sup>1</sup> N.Y. Pub. Off. Law, Art. VI, §§ 84-90.

<sup>2</sup> Tess Kalinowski, "How short-term rental platforms were taxed, restricted in Santa Monica," *Toronto Star* (19 Oct. 2016), available: <https://www.thestar.com/business/2016/10/19/how-short-term-rental-platforms-were-taxed-restricted-in-santa-monica.html>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://fairbnb.ca/>.

## **Records Sought**

This request should be interpreted broadly and includes but is not limited to:

- Records showing the dates, times and, if included, descriptions of meetings attended by Ms. Rosenthal or her staff outside the City of New York concerning short-term rental regulation, including but not limited to calendars, travel logs and itineraries;
- Correspondence between Rosenthal or her staff and representatives of Fairbnb, including but not limited to emails, phone calls, texts, and letters;
- Invitations sent by Fairbnb, their representatives or other groups to Rosenthal or her staff for her participation in discussions — public or private — on the issue of short-term rental regulation outside the City of New York;
- Records concerning the budgets/costs of such trips and whether they were publicly funded or gifted, including but not limited to airfare and transportation, meals, accommodations, and any other miscellaneous costs incurred on the trips.

In accordance with FOIL, we anticipate that within five business days of the receipt of this request, you will provide a written acknowledgment of receipt and an approximate date when such request will be granted or denied.<sup>4</sup>

Please also provide copies of all responsive records, regardless of how created or stored or what device, phone number, or email address they were created, sent or received from, if they pertain to the topics above.

If any of the requested records cannot be emailed to me, please inform me by email of the portions that can be emailed and advise me of the cost for reproducing the remainder of the records requested.

If my request is too broad or does not reasonably describe the records, please contact me via email so that I may clarify my request, and, when appropriate, inform me of how the records are filed, retrieved or generated.

If it is necessary to modify my request, and an email response is not preferred, please contact me at the following telephone number 202-300-3114.

Regards,



Evlondo Cooper  
Senior Fellow  
Checks and Balances Project

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<sup>4</sup> N.Y. Pub. Off. Law § 89(b)(3)(a).