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San Francisco Mulls Fining, Prosecuting Home-Share Sites Like Airbnb for Listing Unregistered Units.

In 2015, a law took effect in San Francisco that requires those who make short-term rentals available on sharing sites such as Airbnb, HomeAway and VRBO to register with local government.

But only around 1,400 of an estimated 7,000 or more owners who rent rooms and entire homes to travelers have complied. So now some members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors are working on new draft legislation. It would potentially hold the sharing sites accountable for users who don't follow registration rules, the San Francisco Chronicle reports.

"This is not about changing existing law," said supervisor David Campos at a Thursday committee hearing. "It is ultimately about corporate responsibility. About an industry that has made and continues to make tens of millions of dollars in this line of work taking responsibility for the negative impact that they are having on the housing stock."

Campos, a Democrat and an attorney with a Harvard Law School pedigree, is one of the lawmakers working on the draft legislation. It is scheduled to be presented Tuesday to the full board of supervisors, which is expected to view it favorably, the newspaper reports.

However, dozens of hosts showed up at the hearing and at least some are concerned that registration requirements are too cumbersome. For example, those who register must provide an itemized list for rentals of all "furniture, appliances, supplies, equipment and fixtures," their cost and acquisition date, so that a "business personal property" tax of roughly 1 percent can be applied.

Under the law being proposed by Campos and fellow Democratic supervisor Aaron Peskin, sharing sites would have to get a registration number from an owner before his or her short-term rental offering could be listed online. Noncompliance could be punished with fines of up to \$1,000 a day per listing and misdemeanor prosecution.

Meanwhile, others are concerned that the proposal could violate federal law insulating websites from liability for user content, the Chronicle reports.

"Anytime someone proposes to place liability on the platform because the platform users are doing something wrong, that raises concerns," said David Greene. He is the Electronic Frontier Foundation's civil liberties director.

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