

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 29 June 2021 7:13 PM
To: Mt Ommaney Electorate Office
Cc: Community Support and Services Committee; Minister for Communities and Housing
Subject: To Community Support and Services Committee (CC my local MP): Submission on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Tenants' Rights) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021

Dear Jessica Pugh MP,

Dear the Community Support and Services Committee, cc my local MP -

I'd like to comment on both the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Tenants' Rights) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to share something with you: a snapshot of what it's like to rent in Queensland.

I have had to move three times in the last three years. Each move costs about two weeks of time and a similar amount of money.

The last move was the worst, as the rental agent had sent through the lease termination message from an address I usually associate with their mass emails. Always, the more meaningful emails had been from a different address. The mass emails go into a folder I don't check very often because it gets a bit spammy. In fact there is an 'unsubscribe' at the bottom of those emails. I wonder what would have happened if I'd unsubscribed? I would probably have missed their email telling me that I had to move out in a few months. In fact this is what happened anyway because I didn't check that spam folder until 2 weeks before that date when I got a call from them saying I had to move out in 2 weeks or lose bond. Pretending to be my friend they offered the services of friendly businesses that they knew, to 'help make it easier' for me. All of which quoted a higher than market value. I went through one of them for carpets and the other for the bondclean. They were extremely picky about

the bondclean, but didn't even bother to look at the carpets.

They told me that the reason the owners wanted me out was because they needed vacant possession of the place so that they could sell it. Yet a few months later I find out that it's being rented out anyway - the vacant possession was a ruse. I have a large placard with the aboriginal flag above the door that my daughter painted for invasion day - maybe the perceived risk posed by this symbol contributed to why they kicked me out. I paid my rent and kept the place tidy.

Or maybe it was because when Covid-19 kicked in and I lost my job, I pleaded for a rental reduction. After cross-examining me to obtain the details of my redundancy payout, they told me I would just have to live off my redundancy instead and pay the full rate, which I did. The capitalist system of exploitation encourages agents to make life even more difficult for marginalised people and people who have lost their income.

In its current form, the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 will do little to improve my situation as one of the 1.8 million renters in Queensland. While this bill may be palatable to the real estate lobby, it completely disregards my experience as a renter.

While I'm pleased that the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill includes positive provisions for renters experiencing domestic and family violence, it contains little other reforms of substance for renters.

I urge the Queensland Government to take this opportunity to amend this bill and to implement real rental reforms that will make renting in Queensland affordable, secure and fair.

It's crucial that rental reforms in Queensland include:

- A genuine end to 'no grounds' evictions – providing tenants with long-term security in their homes without the risk of an unfair eviction at the end of their lease
- Allowing tenants to make minor modifications, like hanging picture frames or installing furniture safety anchors ***or internet cables to reduce childhood exposure to possible radiation from wireless modems (2B cancer risk according to WHO and International Agency for Research on Cancer

These provisions are included in the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (Tenants' Rights) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I urge the government to either support the Tenants' Rights Bill, or amend its own bill to provide real protections for renters.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]