

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 30 June 2021 6:12 AM
To: Greenslopes 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 Joseph Kelly 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, and to take this opportunity to share something with you: a snapshot of what it's like to rent in Queensland.

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In the past 10 years, I have lived for 6 months or more in no less than 15 different rental properties. I've have some good landlords, and some bad. I've had landlords turn up unannounced, I've been threatened with evictions for having grass taller than 2cm, I've had landlords store their property in the rental space, and then turn around and charge me for rubbish removal upon vacation of the property, I've had conditions placed upon my tenancy including notifying agents if I have a family member or friend stay for longer than two nights. The outlandish restrictions placed on living your life by landlords at times feels like a sick game of power.

However, my biggest issue is the difficulty in finding accommodation with a pet. While granted my studies and job have dictated that I move states frequently, I dread each time knowing the struggle and stress of finding somewhere to call home with my pet. Of having to bid to pay extra per month because I have a pet. I have lived overseas, and experienced the reasonable standards other countries impose on landlords. In Denmark for example, each home must be freshly painted between tenants, and landlords have strict criteria for renovation schedules, no questions can be asked about children or pets.

Despite this, I consider myself one of the lucky ones. I own a home which I rent out. And with all my experience as a renter myself I hope I give my tenants the freedom to live their life in their home how they see fit. Do they want to change the curtains - go ahead. Do they want to put up a shelf, paint a wall. Fine! Why should I dictate to them how to live their lives?

With the decline in home ownership of many people my age, I urge you to consider the life and security people require to live fulfilling lives without owning our own home. And I urge you to remember that while there will always be bad tenants, there will also always be bad landlords.

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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
- A real ban on rent bidding – banning agents and property owners from accepting amount above the advertised rent for a property
- Expanding minimum standards to include ventilation, cleanliness and insulation
- Stopping unreasonable rent increases by tying rent increases to general inflation (CPI)
- Ensuring prospective tenants have fair and honest information about the property
- Banning inappropriate or discriminatory questions by lessors
- Make it easier for tenants to have pets – by flipping the onus on property owners/agents to demonstrate why it's unreasonable for a tenant to have pet

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]

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