

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 30 June 2021 8:11 AM
To: Nikki Boyd
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 Nikki Boyd 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 experienced landlords refusing to fix windows until the window panes fell out of the window and smashed onto the path below; refusing to fix the back ramp to a house, instead simply condoning it off and saying we have to use to front entrance only from now on; refusing to service fire alarms on high ceilings and insisting that we buy a ladder and screwdriver and specialist batteries ourselves to fix them. I have lived in a brick house with no roofing insulation, no air conditioning, small windows and no ceiling fans, that on hot summer days sat at 36 degrees inside the house *at night*, a full 8 degrees warmer than outside due to a locked-in heat effect. While some of these issues we could have raised with real estates and landlords about under current legislation, we didn't - because we were afraid we'd either be evicted without cause, given a bad reference for our next house, or the rent repeatedly raised as a punitive measure. I have experienced real estate agen

ts insisting that nothing be stuck up anywhere in the house, including shopping lists in the kitchen and posters with blu tac that did not leave marks - like living in a museum; or more correctly, like living in someone else's income producing hotel, without the room service. I have experienced being inexplicably disallowed from having dogs in houses that had wooden floors, ample garden room, fully fenced with neighbours on every side with dogs. As a result due to the difficulty finding pet friendly, affordable rentals in Queensland, I have been prevented from having my own dog my entire adult life. I have inspected houses I knew I couldn't afford because I knew others would offer more rent behind closed doors just to secure the property, and that they would look better on paper than me or my friends did, despite the fact that I have always paid rent on time and never had a breach or complaint. Multiple times I have rented a property that was dirty on moving in, only to

be told I need a full professional bond clean and professional gardener on moving out, leaving it to a higher standard than what I received it in; when I have tried to clean it myself rather than pay for a bond cleaner, I have invariably been sent back to do ridiculous things like clean out the inside runners of the laundry window (that were greased by someone else to facilitate sliding); or cut back trees that have grown naturally in size and present no hazard. I have been told I cannot plant my own garden or grow my own food in backyards that are completely bare, some with dead grass, even as a long term tenant and even though it would likely increase the value of the property.

I have had multiple real estate agents speak rudely and condescendingly to me. My experience of renting has left me feeling like a second class citizen, disillusioned, and at times unsafe. I have chosen to move back to my family property, which I am privileged to have access to, and am trying to sav

e to buy a house, because I cannot face the stress, humiliation and lack of autonomy of renting any longer.

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.

Please redact my name and contact details from this submission.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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