

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 30 June 2021 1:25 PM
To: Stafford 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 James Sullivan 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 took up a year long lease in Chermside commencing 29th May. The address that I moved into was fair and reasonably priced - an old house, but in a decent location. The rent was \$350 per week for a 3 bedroom house. However, numerous problems began to arise:

- 1) Nonfunctional hot water systems.
- 2) Old mirrors and broken glass was discovered in the home.
- 3) A greenhouse on the property was completely unusable and inaccessible, and still is to this day, due to debris and clutter and rubbish that the owner has left inside - demanding that we instead pay to have it cleaned.
- 4) Frequent short circuiting in the power system.
- 5) Holes in the roof and guttering.
- 6) Poor ventilation and heating.
- 7) Wood rot in the stairs.

Whilst the stairs were eventually replaced at the end of the first year of the lease, the owner refused to do any crucial repairs or changes to the property DESPITE their legal obligations due to the fact that they were selling the property. HOWEVER they also demanded we resign a new lease at an inflated price of \$390 per week. No reasoning

beyond market demand was given for the price increase, and when the Real Estate agency attempted to carry out negotiations for more favourable terms for both parties the owner terminated their contract without notice and sold the house to a new investor completely without forewarning the real estate agency we had - punishing the agency for attempting to encourage reasonable negotiations between both parties. To this day only the stairs and the hot water system has been fixed - none of the other issues have been rectified, and we are now stuck paying a much higher rent on a struggling University and parenting income for nothing to show for

it in the quality of the house we live in.

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]

[REDACTED]

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