

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 12:44 PM
To: South Brisbane 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 Amy MacMahon 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 lived in sharehouse with 4 other people, the real estate never took notice of the house or did inspections, and we took care of any issues ourselves. When it came to a time where names on the lease were to be changed a new agent began managing the property. She came over one day to meet us where she told us that our home would make more money as a student accommodation, so that was what she was going to encourage the owner to do. That means single leases per room which will increase the rent to approximately \$250 per person per week.

Later on she arrived at our house early one morning unannounced. She was adamant she'd given us notice. To ONE of the tenants there was an email sent from a name not know to us, perhaps a colleague, with a vague subject. So the email was not read. We couldn't deny her entry.

As the issue of bond and lease transfer was still at hand for a housemate who moved out, the agent gave us forms to fill out. This time they were mailed. She also called one of my housemates and asked them to bring in the form in person as she wanted to talk. One form was regarding relinquishing the lease and agreeing to move out, which was counteracted by a new lease provided to us. This agent then submitted only the first form to the RTA, and then denied ever giving us a copy of or receiving a new lease. We found out about this when we received a letter telling us we had 1 month to move out. After multiple phone calls to her, her office, the RTA, without a paper trail we had no legs to stand on. We had 5 people to be homeless within 4 weeks should they not find accommodation. 5 people who had built a community in 4101 and wanted to stay in 4101. Due to the expense of available properties at that time we couldn't all move together, instead we were battling to be accepted i

nto rooms in other share houses. This called such an immense amount of stress and emotional upset for us all. [REDACTED] single handedly abused our trust in her as an agent and pushed us out of our home.

That house remained empty for well over a year until it went up for sale.

I am now in a semi-private 1brm unit under a Queenslanders that costs \$260 a week and I am on Austudy as a full time student where my total allowance per week is \$300, leaving me \$40 for clothes, food, bills etc.

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,

