

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 6:59 PM
To: Toowoomba North 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 Trevor Watts 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 rented a home with 3 mates - we all had great references. The owners of the property drove past the property every single weekend and subsequently every single Monday, without fail, I would get a phone call from our property manager "making a suggestion". These suggestions would range from the lawn needed to be mowed, the lawn furniture should be put away, it looked messy for us to be sitting on our driveway in camp chairs. As renters we felt like our right to live peacefully was being imposed upon as we were great tenants, there were no issues with inspections and they had no reason to suspect we were doing anything wrong. It got to the point where we felt violated and harassed. We spoke to the RTA who advised there wasn't much that could be done as they weren't entering the property and we couldn't stop them from driving past. It got to the point where I felt sick with anxiety everytime my phone rang on a Monday morning, just waiting for the latest criticism from the prop

erty manager. What an uncomfortable situation to be in - to feel like you can't have peaceful privacy in your place of residence.

Another housing situation I was in, was another sharehouse I lived in where mould was present in the house. Repeated emails to the property manager weren't replied to. She dodged every phone call and never phoned back. Yet, if we wanted to leave, we would have to break the lease and incur all the costs involved? How is this fair when that can affect the tenants health and the property manager and owner can refuse to deal with the issue.

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.

Can I please request my name to be redacted from this submission.

Yours sincerely,

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