

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 7:55 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 what it's like being a renter. I moved into a property in April 2019 and was unfortunately told that a week after I moved into my rental in [REDACTED] the house was to be sold. I asked the agent at the inspection if the property was able to be rented for 5 years, yet said just take a year lease, i should have twigged then. I have a disabled son and we need to be close to the hospital for ongoing surgery and schooling.

Upon turning the stove on for the first time in my new property, I realised the gas stove wasn't working, in fact leaking. I asked the owner if someone could do something about it who then proceeded to abuse me and said that he was doing a favour for me to fix it. I was given the owner's number because I had confronted a tradie walking around my property a week after I had moved in and I had complained the the real-estate about it because I hadn't received notice.

The real estate told me they also struggled with dealing with him.

During the next week, I met a wife of one of the owners, she then told me the property was to be sold. I was aghast, this was only the beginning, next there were constant breaches with the angry owner turning up whenever he wanted, even a fence was built when I went out for the day when they said they were marking the backyard, there was no decrease in my rent.

I found out they were sub dividing and so more and more breaches occurred, they entered my house to do a surveyor report whilst I was in hospital, they lied and let themselves in and said they wouldn't do it. (The neighbour across the road told me after I was out of hospital with emergency surgery to restore my sight).

I couldn't keep up with the paperwork from weekly breaches and the angry owner (even with his kids on one occasion) entering the property. It became a full time job liaising with QStars, a lawyer, the real estate and both owners breaching.

Then in the height of covid (March-April 2020) they organised house inspections because they decided to sell the house – even though their sub-division hadn't gone through. They decided to not renew my lease and then tried to take money from my bond for a deadlock that never worked. This was a whole year of housing stress that affected my paid employment, parenting and mental health with the constant abuse over a 12 month period through breaches, nasty emails, excessive demands, lying, verbal abuse - you name it, they did it. It jeopardised trying to find a place because I didn't want the real-estate to abuse me anymore, so I omitted that tenancy from my application which was noticed by the real-estate for my current application - I forwarded her a number of emails. She was gobsmacked and said that she would not let that happen to me in my current rental.

I did get an article published about how absolutely awful this experience was for me.

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This is just one of many stories I could tell you. So I urge you to please help us renters who will never have the means to buy a property in inner city Brisbane.

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 and I have had to wear the financial burden, stress and abuse renting sub standard properties.

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 such as being able to see the previous entry and exit reports.
- 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
- Having a blacklist and a star rating for landlords, agents and real estates, I do not agree that only tenants are blacklisted

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]

[Redacted contact information]