

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 8:59 AM
To: Greenslopes 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 Joseph Kelly 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.

At my previous rental in Tarragindi, I received a notice to pay a plumbing bill because baby wipes and tampons were found causing the blockage. Funny thing was, I was there with the plumber and there were no baby wipes or tampons, just an old cracked pipe that needed further investigation. When I told the property manager this she said they must have made a mistake, and blamed the plumber. I can assure you it was no mistake. It was the landlord refusing to pay it. He is a highly paid anaesthetist by the way. After we refused to pay it, we were then told the rent would increase by \$50 a week (in retaliation). Even the property manager agreed this was unreasonable and encouraged us to move out. We ended up temporarily moving in with my mother with our two kids and putting our things in storage because we couldn't find another suitable rental in time.

In our current rental our two kids beg us for a pet, but we can't have one here. No pets allowed. When I was a child pets were the best part of my childhood. We pay more in rent than most baby boomers and gen x'ers pay for their mortgage, if they still have one. And we can't have a pet? It's unfair.

These are just a few of our negative experiences as renters.

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,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.