

## Community Support and Services Committee

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, 3 July 2021 11:34 AM  
**To:** Craig Crawford  
**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 Craig Crawford 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 through most of my 20s in Queensland and was regularly confronted with the fact that the current system viewed me as a second-class citizen. Real Estate Agencies seemed to view the renter as the enemy, an untrustworthy threat to the home-owner whose protection they saw as their duty. Independent of on-time rent payments and appropriate care of the properties I rented, there was at best a cold indifference to the renter and at worst passive-aggressive behaviour from Estate Agents and owners.

Often the issue I had with the renting experience was limited to the obvious fact that people in the Real Estate industry saw me as lesser and not as someone to whom they owed any responsibility (which has an indelible effect on a person's feeling of self-worth). However, I also had many memorable experiences of the injustice of the current rental system. I've lived in rental properties with obvious mould issues that were not addressed despite multiple requests. I've experienced significant and unjustifiable rent increases, including in one case where the owner had recently asked me to consider moving out because they wanted to move back in. I've moved into multiple rental properties that were in an obviously unclean state, and had endless trouble with agents when doing a bond clean myself even when the end standard was far better than the unlivable condition of the property when I moved in (bond gauging is obviously rife, and a clear way for owners to force renters to contri-

bute to upkeep costs). The list could go on.

The current renting system in Queensland is heavily skewed in favour of the home-owner and introduces numerous challenges and hurdles for young people starting out their adult lives and for people who haven't been able to get into the housing market yet, furthering an already too great divide.

In its current form, the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 will do little to improve the situation 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,

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