

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 11:37 AM
To: Nicklin 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 Robert Skelton 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 was in the rental market between 2014 - 2019 as a single parent. I believed selling my home would allow me to be more present as a parent to raise my son by reducing the financial burden. It was a big mistake.

During this time I moved five times, 3 of which in less than 2 years. I shared with other parents who had mental health issues and children who were violent and uncontrollably aggressive towards my son. I had flatmates who became aggressive and violent, and on one occasion police needed to be involved.

I had real estate agents simply enter my properties without notice and refuse to make repairs to old worn out items such as dishwashers and stoves. I had them take money from bond for damage already in place such as 20 year old carpet, and for bond cleans, despite me paying a professional- just not one of their choice.

I ended up taking a lease on a \$430 per week property when my guaranteed income was only \$580 per week. This meant I hustled to pay the rent- sublet, Airbnb, and withdrew out of my superannuation simply to have a safe and stable home to live in for my son.

I now work as a Social Worker with 15-25 year olds as they exit child safety care and these young people are literally being exited into homelessness. Spare rooms and tents are transition plans for 18 year olds these days on the Sunshine Coast - and this is not ok. There is no stable future with this continuing.

-The Airbnb market needs to be curbed and highly taxed.

- The government needs to flood the market with studio apartments and make them available for rent at affordable rates for young adults as they transition from home because currently private people are offering caravan and makeshift options for up to \$250 per week and these are unsafe and unregulated e.g. makeshift caravans and quasi shanti towns or tiny houses.

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,

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