

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 12:22 PM
To: McConnel 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 Grace Grace 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.

[REDACTED] personal statement:

Since I first moved out of home when I was 20, I have moved 7 times. I am approaching my 30th birthday and the restrictions I experience in rentals, which as a young person I was not as phased by, are now feeling like a significant leash on my freedom and quite frankly are demoralising.

My current residence is the most expensive I have rented to date. In order to find this residence I lived with my mother for 2 months, constantly looking, places I would have afforded were out-bid. We found this place and were pressured to accept the lease within 24 hours which meant we were unable to properly inspect the house; we were afraid of losing to another renter, so we took it.

I am living with housemates and looking to the future I don't know how it's possible not to.

And I am lucky! Women are often forced to live with strangers. During lockdown my (ex)friend secretly filmed his female housemate in the shower, he found her on flatmates.com. (He has been prosecuted). She had no choice but to trust him, renting is expensive and difficult to find close to the city, especially as a single woman. Lower, fixed rents would mean safer situations for women.

I am independent and single - I don't plan on living with a partner or having children. I work 30 hours a week and have my own business. I work hard but I am unable live on my own or make enough savings towards my own place. So renting is my lifestyle, I am trapped in it.

I would support a council that reformed renter's rights to be more future safe - less rent increases, no out bidding and support renters to make whatever abode you are in a long term home.

I could write a novel on the way the rental industry has taken advantage of me as a renter. But I'll just say, I am tired of moving and I am sick of feeling like a squatter when I am providing landlords a more than generous on going income.

Renting is the contemporary normal living situation. We need new legislation that reflects this.

*End personal statement.

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,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]