

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 12:46 PM
To: Maryborough 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 Bruce Saunders 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.

Rent is unaffordable, I would move anywhere in Qld/NSW for work, but there is no affordable housing to move to. Granny flats charge as much rent as a house! "if" you found a suitable place you could only afford the rent, not the utilities and food as well. You are forced into house sharing.

I'm approaching 60 years of age, why are my share housing options so dangerous and inappropriate?

I appreciate the people who are good enough to rent a room to me, in the property they rent. The owners were not prepared to accept me initially, despite the vulnerable position I was and am still in. The situation can only be temporary for all of us. We all need our own, secure homes, where there is employment.

I have to work for the next ten years before I am eligible for retirement, the possibility of becoming homeless is more realistic than getting a job or a home.

I am on the waiting list for public housing, but have been advised that could be at least a five year wait. There no affordable options if my current situation should be terminated due to sale of the property, death or hospitalisation of my older flatmate, who is in poor health, or my younger flatmates receive better housing offers. There are too few suitable options for unemployable women over 55. Homelessness is a constant fear for me.

(PLEASE REDACT MY NAME AND DETAILS AS PUBLICATION WILL OFFEND PEOPLE AND PUT ME AT FURTHER RISK OF HOMELESSNESS)

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.

(PLEASE REDACT MY NAME AND DETAILS AS PUBLICATION WILL OFFEND PEOPLE AND PUT ME AT FURTHER RISK OF HOMELESSNESS)

Yours sincerely,

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