
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 2:05 PM
To: Cooper 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 Jonty Bush 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:

I was not a tenant in Queensland, I was a landlord/owner of six small units.

We dismissed our agent, because they cost us too much and were unresponsive to our tenants needs. My wife and I then managed the units ourselves.

We selected all our tenants directly and with care. We knew them all and ensured they got to meet each other: In short we built a small community of mutual respect.

We enjoyed the interactions with our tenants and had very few problems at all.

We performed the maintenance of the units in a timely manner.

There is a tendency to view tenants as second class people, not the critical clients of the landlord that they are. The nature of that relationship is a big part of the problem at present.

As a landlord, your tenants are a vital part of your business.

Treat tenants with respect and care, and they will almost always return it. That has been our experience.

We turned our units around from being a place that people left in a few months, to a place that tenants chose to stay in for several years. We averaged 98% occupancy. This all came from just a change of management style.

Our experience was gained as tenants in Europe, where the agent makes a short list of candidates, but the final decision is the result of an interview between the owner and the tenant. The agent then has no further part in the tenancy.

Many people in Europe live as tenants through most of their working lives, it is mainstream and renters are not viewed as second class.

This is where we need to get to.

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 the experience of renters.

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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