
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 4 July 2021 7:15 AM
To: Bonney 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 Samuel O'Connor 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.

Impossible. Real estate agents assess rent eligibility based on rent being 3 times that of income. As a single mother with a disabled child I rely on only the carers payment. My rent cap therefore is less than \$200 a week. My son is a teenager and has an assistance dog (labrador) - there are ZERO two bedroom rentals with yards anywhere between Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast. Even rentals that are under \$300 are hard to find and these have dozens of applications. Having literally applied for hundreds of rentals and been unsuccessful we ended up living in a vehicle for two years and are now in temporary accommodation. Whilst homeless, I saw the extent of the hidden homeless situation - mainly elderly women and single mothers who felt ashamed and didn't want anyone to know their situation.

This situation is much larger than is being recognised. Unstable and unaffordable housing is destroying communities, people are having to leave areas where they grew up. They are having to leave support networks, schools, extended family and jobs. I have a university degree and worked professionally until my son was born. I would love to work again and have had to turn down jobs due to housing insecurity.

Renters need long term security (5+ year leases) and affordable rents (30% of income with increases indexed to CPI).

Having so many women and children go homeless is a terrible reflection upon the current economy where profit over people is normalised.

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,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.