
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 4 July 2021 9:48 AM
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: a snapshot of what it's like to rent in Queensland.

I am a single parent living in inner Brisbane with my daughter. We have never been able to stay in a commercial rental for more than 2 consecutive years. While I've always lived in low cost rental with little street appeal, I take great pride in my home and creating an inviting and presentable space. This has resulted in multiple owners taking the opportunity to sell while the home is neatly presented. While I have no animosity towards these owners, it can feel like there's no incentive to be a good tenant beyond avoiding negative consequences. When there is an upswing in maintenance like exterior painting or additional yard work following an initial inspection, I experience a creeping anxiety waiting for the email notifying me that there will soon be photographers and twice weekly open homes. I recently resigned the lease to my current home, and asked for a 13 month lease over a 12 month lease to avoid scheduling a potential house move at the same time as another even

t in my life. This request is was denied. This feels arbitrary and is a dehumanising experience to be so dismissed.

When I've spoken to home owners about the cost of rental, I've received dismissive responses about home ownership costs that I likely haven't considered, like rates and strata fees. I think it's likely that these people don't consider the true cost of rental when having to move every year or two.

This is a list of costs that occur when moving frequently that I think are often overlooked:

-double rent (it is often impossible to secure a new lease starting on the day you want it to. I could probably complete a full house move including comprehensive entry report and cleaning of the exited property in 2 days. But with few homes in my area and price range available, I have to be the most attractive tenant to secure the required property. This means considering the best move in date for the owners so their property is vacant for as little time as possible. I am often paying up to 2 or 3 weeks at double rent, just to secure my housing)

-additional/inappropriate furnishings (with so few rentals available, it is often not possible to match previous amenities with future amenities. This means I have needed to purchase wardrobes when I've move from a home with built ins to without, only to sell these 12 months later. I moved to a home where the kitchen only had storage under the sink and had to purchase a cabinet to function as pantry and storage for crockery. This doesn't seem like a big deal, but the time and energy it takes to find something appropriate on marketplace or gumtree, go to inspect, hire a van to pick up, and then do this again in reverse can be an exhausting process. The alternative is spending more money to buy something new and have delivered. Either way i spend energy making a cost/time analysis to make these decisions and then repeat in 12 months time.)

-furniture deterioration (moving is hard on your furniture. Most of the wear and tear and scuffs etc on my furniture is from moving house. Items that should last 8-10 years can be unusable after 2-3 moves.)

-physical toll (paying for movers and cleaners is privilege I couldn't afford in the past when considering the other costs of moving.)

-loss of work (when I couldn't afford movers, I was reliant on friends and family for assistance. As a casual shift worker when most of them worked Monday to Friday, I have needed to cancel weekends worth of shifts and lost income to move. Again, it takes time and energy to complete a cost/benefit analysis to determine if it's better to lose work or hire movers)

- internet (this here is a big one. In the last two homes I've moved into there has been months and month of wait for adequate internet. With the NBN purchase of ADSL lines, you can no longer connect ADSL 2 to a home that is deemed to be in an NBN ready home. In the home I lived in from June 2019-June 2021 in West End there was zero access to adsl or NBN. The solution by providers was that I could use an expensive and slow dongle style wireless operating off 4G. This was only effective in 50% of the home and during the school lockdown my daughter had to work from a table outside. The previous tenants of this home had no issue accessing ADSL because they had connected prior to the NBN purchase of lines. Had they remained, they would have been able to access internet, we couldn't access because ours was a new account for ADSL. The NBN was never connected while I was in this home, despite my quarterly calls to follow up. In my current home, there was no NBN for 5 months. We

had to organise the connection to be run through the roof of the townhouse next door. Again, we could not connect ADSL despite the previous tenants accessing this until they moved out. This is a hugely expensive exercise.

I need the opportunity to secure a long term lease. My daughter has lived in 5 houses through primary school, and I'd like her to have secure housing throughout high school. I'd like to spend the thousands it costs me to move each year

on a deposit for a home.

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]