
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 4 July 2021 10:40 AM
To: Ninderry 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 Daniel Purdie 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 28 and I have a one year old son with developing asthma and other health issues. We are currently sleeping on the floor of a cold, damp garage.

I realise this situation doesn't sound as bad as many others that you might here or read about but it's bad enough for my son.

Up until may this year we had a rental. A roof over our heads, rent paid not only on time but also in advance, lived cleanly and quietly and we were great friends with the neighbours. We were exceptional tenants.

Then we got given notice to leave and only told that the owner wanted to move back in. Upsetting yes but we understood the hard times some people were facing.

Turns out the owner didn't want to move back in at all, instead she moved in her builder friend and is getting him to renovate the place so that she can put it back up for rent for more money.

I searched and searched and searched. Informing every agent of our situation. That I had a small, sick child (and a small dog) and we were desperate to get a house before being homeless.

No one cared or listened.

Everyone only saw dollar signs and chances to cash in. Agents and landlords both.

At inspections for potential houses, I heard people offering the agents to pay months in advance, sometimes a whole years worth of rent to secure a place. Most often than not, they had just recently moved here from interstate.

How can I compete with that?

A single mother, with a sick child who has lived here her whole life. A local person who has contributed her blood, sweat, tears and money into her local area/economy and then some interstate, rich snob trying to escape a lockdown gets priority over me because they have money.

Not to mention the fact that property owners are also money hungry and kicking out perfectly good, local tenants for no reason so they can raise the rent of there property to astronomical prices.

I am now being forced to move away from my family and friends and my support network to a place where I don't know a soul. I'm being forced off the sunshine coast, which has been my home for 28 years to places that a single mother and small child probably shouldn't live by themselves. Providing I can find a place.

I am not naive, I understand that there's thousands of people in the same, if not a worst situation than myself and my son but that just drives home the point that something has to be done!

The stress that this has put me and so many others under is at a critical level and could ultimately be avoided.

- Stop letting tenants be kicked out for doing everything right, just so owners can make more money.

- Stop rent bidding.

- Give local people a fair chance.

- Make it mandatory that you can not be refused a property due to having a pet. The amount of pets being surrendered by tenants at the moment in the hopes of getting a house is leading to rescues being overloaded and many animals having to be euthanased.
- Introduce some sort of rent control for people who meet a certain criteria like pensioners. Protect them from sudden rent increases.

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]