
From: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 4 July 2021 11:40 AM
To: Maiwar 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 Michael Berkman 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.

When we first moved into our previous place there was a flea infestation and mouldy curtains, yet [REDACTED] tried to argue with us when we told them.

Every year after that, they increased the rent when we signed the new lease. Despite being part of 4 identical Terrance units, all our neighbours were paying different weekly rent amounts. Our neighbour who had been there 7 years was paying about \$80 more a week than the new neighbours who had just moved in.

We asked if it was possible to not increase the rent and continue paying what we already were, as it was becoming both over our budget and not worth the price of the property. The property manager was very rude and basically told us to leave if we didn't like it.

We started applying to new places, however [REDACTED] did not provide a rental reference for us causing us to be overlooked for some of the properties we applied for. They then told us we could remain at the current rent amount but by this point we were set on leaving.

Thankfully we were able to get a reference from my partners previous rental agents and were able to secure a new place.

One week before our lease expired I emailed them asking if they wanted to do a final walk through with us, to address any issues before we gave back the keys. I received no response and we returned the keys 2 days before the conclusion of our lease. On the final day of our lease (at 4pm) they sent us a long email with things to fix.

Some of these things included a lack of lightbulb in the garage (which was never there to begin with).

The curtains being dirty (note that these are the replacement curtains we bought out of pocket)

The insides of the oven glass door being dirty (we got professional bond cleaners in to do the best they could).

A piece of string on the wall.

They insisted we pick up the keys ourself and fix these things despite us no longer being legal tenants. While I offered to drop a lightbulb at the office and gave them the bond cleaner details so they could dispute it themselves, they refused.

So I just applied for our bond back and ignored their emails. They never tried stop our bond getting back so that was the end of it.

As you can imagine this was stressful and exhausting so I would appreciate more rights and protection as a renter.

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]

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