
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 5 July 2021 3:11 PM
To: South Brisbane 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 Amy MacMahon 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 I first moved out of home, I like many signed up for a lease with friend in a sharehouse and set about making a home for ourselves.

After signing the lease, we were informed that the backyard was in fact a different property and the owner was constructing a new house there.

Over the course of the lease, we constantly had to put up with extreme amounts of dust and noise due to the construction, with no compensation for the disruption to our quiet and peaceful enjoyment of the property.

Halfway through the construction we found out the property owner had told tradies and contractors to use our power points and water as needed. All electrical requirements for the neighbouring construction were being powered by power points under our house. All water for concreting and other construction was from our garden tap.

When we noticed, complained, and asked for compensation. We were informed that construction was almost done (it went on for at least the remainder of the lease ~5 months) and that if we continued to complain we would be evicted "there were plenty of other people looking for rentals". We stopped complaining fearing we would be evicted and not get our lease renewed. In the end it was not, despite requests. I believe it was the issues we raised with the landlord that led to our lease not being renewed, as the property was put up for rent again after we left.

This attitude in my experience is pervasive in Queensland's rental market, renters are at whims of landlords with little recourse. A tenants right in the property they are renting are secondary to the wants and needs of the owner.

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.

I would like to request my contact details please be redacted from my submission.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.