
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 7 July 2021 9:31 AM
To: Mark Bailey
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 Mark Bailey 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 tertiary qualified professional person, I run a social enterprise delivering mental health programs for young people in schools and also work in community development across multiple social impact projects in SE Queensland. I am have full parenting responsibilities for two children.

My income is above average and I have the benefit of skills to navigate mega systems and find necessary information about my rights and the laws that protect them. I can't image what renting must be like for people who don't have the same skills and resources as I do. I often think about that, I am struggling but for every person that speaks up for their tenancy rights I believe there are 1000s who can't, don't have support or capacity to do so. So please consider that for every submission you receive. For one voice - there are 1000s of other who have been worn down by systems of housing monopoly and the systemic oppression that is a result.

I have moved 7 times in the last 12 years. Why - because I had to... owners would either end my lease for two reasons 1) they wanted it back to occupy 2) I sought my rights to be met ie. general repairs or respectful engagement by property manager (generally not speaking to me like I don't have rights, using bullying language, making statements about my mental state, or determining what is considering clean when doing surprise inspections at 8am on a school day. There are too many examples in my story to even write here.)

Despite each time I take a lease I explain I am seeking long term tenure, due to the needs of raising a family. The expense, stress, setback and absolute nervous system trauma uninvited moving creates for a young family is extensive. It effects my children security and sense belonging. Luckily I have made it possible to keep my kids in the same school, but they have both mentioned that its not fair that their friends don't move so much and also how it effects their ability to concentrate while they don't know where the next house will be.

I have been working to save a deposit so we can exit this horrible renting trap. But each move costs about \$5000 when you include removalists, bond cleaners and consider the lost time for work that occurs. So basically the costs of my forced moves in recent years are pretty much the housing deposit I needed to purchase my own home.

The financial costs are one aspects, a very significant impact long term is created due to lack of ethical practice in the sector. The agents and property managers do not have sufficient training, regulation of practice or requirement to meet the legal requirements of the tenant. It is obviously 95% of property mangers do not work for the tenant but actively target the tenant unfairly. Statements of lifestyle statements as a single mother have been made multiple times. With no awareness of what that does to a intergenerational survivor of DFV. Real estate agents need more regulation, the trauma - abuse - discrimination - character defamation that occurs within that sector and with

no accountability to the 'professionals' who are meant to be managing the contractual obligation and legal requirements of the tenancy agreements. It is rare to find a real estate agent that isn't either dismissive, abusive, aggressive or manipulative with the power dynamic. Its concerning and simply sad the dysfunctional power dynamic in this area. It really needs dramatic reform, especially considering the housing crisis is not lifting. The shortages are real, the wealth divide is growing exponentially and the fact housing is the absolute foundation for everything.

Without housing no one can progress. My example, I work very hard for community - professionally and as a volunteer. But the regular setback from forced relations pretty much keep my unable to really progress. I see this, I know this and its extremely disheartening. But yet, I show up at schools - sports - community events and play normal for my kids, even though my brain is firing extreme stress that comes with the instinctual need to secure safe housing.

Sometimes its not about not working hard enough, anyone in my world would attest to the ridiculous amount I have to work to maintain my life, and its completely debilitating sometimes looking to the future. Knowing that the housing sector has been completely manipulated by government systems, policies and lack of true awareness to people who don't fall within the deity like position of 'house-owners'.

This problem is going anywhere. It will only get worse. The impact are real, long term and effecting the most vulnerable.

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,

