
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 8 July 2021 3:26 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.

Hello, My name is [REDACTED]

I am a [REDACTED], currently undertaking my honours in Journalism. I have spent the last four years bouncing around rental properties in the inner city. Whilst moving from house to house, year-to-year, works more for a young adult, the same cannot be said for the elderly or sick.

I come from a low income family, barely living above the poverty line. My single mother, who raised me and my brother alone, has never been able to afford to enter the property market by herself. She has lived in more than 15 rental properties in 18 years.

My mother suffers from severe mental health issues including; depression, anxiety, PTSD, and substance abuse. As tormenter as my mother is, she has always been able to provide a loving and safe home for my brother and me to return to, until now.

Living [REDACTED], my mother is about to become homeless for the first time in her life. The property she is renting has just been sold and she is being forced to find new accommodation.

[REDACTED] is experiencing a massive rental shortage. Over the past month, my mother has inspected more than a dozen properties. At every inspection, mum along with countless other would-be renters are treated to over-priced, poorly maintained "homes". The cherry on top, some of these properties are listed stating, "rental agreements for the highest bidder". This is absolutely disgraceful. What chance does my mother have when she is competing for a rental in a highly competitive market, on a shoestring budget?

At the age of 58, she is now being forced to put all of her belongings in to storage and move into my grandmothers 2 bedroom rental property.

My 89 year-old grandmother could very easily be in the same circumstance and my mother. I guess she is lucky to still have 6 months left on her lease, right?

In order to assist my mother in finding a home, my 26 year-old brother, who is a recent graduate of an undergraduate of classical voice from the Sydney Conservatorium, and I are preparing to assist my mother financially in order to afford a rental.

For a women who works 30 hrs a week to rely on her two low-income earning sons for rental assistances is heart breaking.

If we truly live in a society that rewards people based upon their merits, my mother would be living in [REDACTED]

Please feel free to contact me about this for further details.

Regards,

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]