
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 8 July 2021 5:41 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.

I have houseshared for four years in a heritage apartment building in Kangaroo Point. [REDACTED] has been an important and beloved cultural touchstone for at least a decade, having been home to many of Brisbane's creatives and currently housing a close-knit community including longterm residents, artists and culturally significant figures. Fighting for basic maintenance was routine for us tenants, including concrete falling from the ceiling, dripping black mould, plumbing issues borne of poor repairs resulting in sewage flooding a common area and a constantly stuck-open garage door leading to stored belongings being stolen on multiple occasions. Patch-up jobs were sometimes done, but never seemed to fix the problem and sometimes caused new problems. The agents, on behalf of the owners always placated us tenants, saying they planned to fix up the building soon, which was rapidly falling into decline. We were given notice in June that no leases are to be renewed, which for myself meant just over two months to secure a new home and move in the middle of a hot rental market and unpredictable Covid lockdowns. Not having a family 'safety net' and being a casual worker, this was an immense source of stress and my mental health suffered. It makes me angry to think the owners never bothered to make our lives safe or comfortable, and that they are displacing an irreplaceable community in the middle of a pandemic situation so that they can hike the price when they make the building available to rent again.

I am afraid that this amazing place will become just another footnote in our city's history, those who call it home kicked out and replaced by those fortunate enough to be able to pay to be respected.

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

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.