
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 11 July 2021 2:19 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.

1. Some real estate agents have been extremely aggressive and nasty.
2. One real estate agent decided that the worm farm in our garden area was counted as our "pets" and forced us to remove it without consulting the owner.
3. We have no security of where we live. The owner could kick us out for any reason at any moment with only short notice.
4. Our rent is our biggest household expense and we cannot live on centrelink payments without going backwards now that I am no longer employed.
5. We are able to have a child but not a pet. We would dearly love to have a dog or cat but despite being perfect 14 year long term tenants who 100% pay on time and never damage our rental we have no real rights to choose what we do in our "home".
6. Because of high rental costs, lack of security, bullying from certain real estate agents and not being able to have a pet we really feel like 2nd class citizens and feel trapped in the renting cycle.
7. I feel as anxious about our rental security as I felt being a research scientist on permanent short term contracts. Knowing at any time I could lose my job for literally zero reason at all.

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.