
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 11 July 2021 10:03 AM
To: Southport 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 Robert Molhoek 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 was a resident in a rental property from December 2013 until we received an eviction notice to move out in June 2021. The reasoning given was that the landlord intends to sell the property, and I also understand that they are in financial hardship so need to 'cash out' for their retirement. This is what's known as a 'without grounds' eviction, where there is no wrongdoing on the part of the tenant, and financial reasoning drives the landlord's decisions.

In October 2020 I suffered an injury in a vehicle accident which limits my ability to walk and go to work, and I require assistive devices to use the shower and toilet. Currently the rental market is flooded with applicants so finding a similar rental close by to our current residence was an impossibility, so myself and our housemates went our separate ways. I was lucky enough to be able to move in with my brothers, who were able to provide suitable accommodation for my needs. I also have two cats, and being a responsible pet owner I have ensured that they will never be abandoned or given up for adoption. I am so, SO lucky to be able to move somewhere that fits me perfectly, but I understand and see stories of other renters who are not as lucky as me, and are facing homelessness by being forced out of their homes when their lease expires, with negative consequences against their rental history.

In the background to all of this, moving house has significantly impacted my personal welfare. The effort required to restore the premises to an acceptable level of cleanliness, as well as packing to move, put back my physio recovery by a number of weeks, plus I had to spend a large amount of money bringing in cleaners and removalists to assist where I would have been able to do it myself previously. On top of this the landlord via their real estate agent have claimed 100% of the bond for frivolous and unfair claims towards damage that we didn't cause - which I am currently fighting for with the RTA. This bond is money that I need to help pay for the aforementioned moving costs and for future bond deposits, and it appears that the landlord is just using it to fund the renovations they are

carrying out in order to put the property on the market. Currently, the party who claims the bond first gets the bond, while the other party has to argue their case. This needs to be chang

ed to a 50/50 system, to ensure bonds are paid out fairly. As it currently stands it's completely unfair and unjust.

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,

