
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 12 July 2021 10:46 AM
To: Anastacia Palaszczuk
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 Anastacia Palaszczuk 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 single mother with two children and I was fortunate to find an NRAS townhouse in [REDACTED] in 2013 with three bedrooms after living for 13 months in a one room granny flat when my children were young.

I have lived in [REDACTED] ever since - 8 years and am thankful to have paid under \$300 a week in rent under NRAS and made a lovely, safe and stable home for myself and my children.

Unfortunately the NRAS program for affordable Housing was scrapped by the Liberal Government a few years ago. It would be beneficial to so many if the Queensland Government reinstated it for low income families to be able to rent homes at an affordable level.

A couple of months ago my townhouse complex changed site managers. I have always gotten along with the previous site managers and we were very respectful of each other. I had a very stressful and in the end disastrous first meeting and first inspection by the new site manager last week.

The new site manager from the moment she walked through my door disrespected my privacy and was a bully. She was obviously very stressed and anxious and made me feel very uncomfortable in my own home. I asked her to please not wake up my 17 year old daughter who is currently studying Year 12 and has a part time job and her reply was to say she would do her room first and barged in without knocking, turned on the light and started forensically photographing the walls. My daughter was scared and hid under her doona.

I tried to be friendly with her and explain that we had lived here for over 7 years and that I do keep the place as clean as I can on my own but I was very busy so the home was not perfect the day she came. Instead of respect for being a long term tenant when other tenants in townhouses around me have come and gone over the years I instead was judged and spoken to like I was a child or very stupid.

She had no boundaries or respect that she was in my home and turned on lights, touched things and pulled up blinds and forensically photographed everything and then just left them for me to fix. She did not care at all about getting to know me or talk to me about anything to do with maintenance of the home. Instead she very rudely told me to email her in regards to any repairs or maintenance (which I was going to do but thought it would be good to discuss issues with her first - when I told her this her reply was a mocking "Gunna do is not good enough").

I was shocked and quite stressed at her behaviour. She wasn't wearing a face mask or offered to use hand sanitiser before she touched all my light switches etc. I had a bad feeling which was justified because the next afternoon I had an email from her saying the Landlord was not going to renew my lease.

After over 7 years with no problems at all - in fact my Landlord has installed air conditioning in upstairs bedroom which becomes uninhabitable in summer due to the heat and last year gave me permission to have a cat so has been up until now very favourable to me living here. I fear this site manager decided she wanted me to leave because of her personal dislike for me and has persuaded the Landlord not to renew the lease. No reasons were given as to why my lease is not going to be renewed.

My daughter is finishing Year 12 and will be studying for exams and my son has just started Year 7. I have nowhere to go and three bedroom homes near my children's schools are unaffordable. I was hoping to stay in my current home for at least two more years.

I am now fearful of becoming homeless or moving to a rental with only two rooms which would be very unsatisfactory for my children. With news all over Australia of a major housing crisis - especially for women and children I am actually terrified of not finding a suitable home by the time my lease is finished.

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,

