
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 12 July 2021 12:57 PM
To: Dianne Farmer
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 Dianne Farmer 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 rented for around 5 years -- ever since moving out from my family's home. I lived in a large share house of 5 people, where the rent was initially set at \$520 per week - a fair amount to pay when split between the five of us. However, we were struggling with part time or casual jobs while studying at uni.

Each time a new lease was signed, the landlord raised the rent. At the time we were looking to move out, simply because we had finished our studies, the rent was \$570 per week. We officially sent over the Notice of Intention to leave and we started to look for new houses. When we had all settled new leases at separate houses (which was turbulent because of the current rental crisis), the real estate reached out and asked that if we wanted to quickly sign a new lease, we could rent our share house for \$500 per week.

This was an outrage as this indicated to us that the rent increases were purely because the landlord thought they could take advantage of us and wanting to live in a home over 3.5 years. The house was not in good shape either, things fell apart and the plumbing issues were always fixed by the landlord himself in a clumsy way that meant it needed to be repaired again and again. So when it was convenient for the landlord, the landlord felt it right to keep upping the rent. But when the landlord was put into an inconvenient position, of finding new renters for their home, they tried to take advantage of us by lowering us rent.

Although this wasn't a dire situation for us, I can't help but worry for those who have more dependants and less stable income (in comparison to the already low but consistent austudy payments).

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]