



13 July 2021

Community Support and Services Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

By email: CSSC@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Members,

Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this Bill.

Make Renting Fair in Queensland is made up of an alliance of 14 organisations from the community sector, and over 50 supporter organisations across Queensland. Our vision is to reform our renting laws so that all Queenslanders can make the place they live in their home, whether they rent or own.

The alliance is calling on the State Government to make amendments to the proposed new rental reform legislation to ensure that all Queensland families who rent have laws that are fair, safe and certain.

Make Renting Fair in Queensland position

Make Renting Fair in Queensland supports some aspects of this Bill, including improving protections for people at risk of domestic and family violence, and enhancing opportunities for tenants to have a pet.

However, the Bill fails to meet its key stated objectives of adequately addressing the significant power imbalance between tenants and lessors in the private rental market in Queensland and represents a significant departure from the tenancy protections proposed in the Department's 2019 Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (C-RIS).

In particular it fails to ensure that vulnerable community members are supported to sustain tenancies and fails to remove the ability of lessors to end tenancies without grounds. These failures, unless addressed, will undermine the intent of the Bill and leave tenants exposed to continued insecure tenure, unstable and unfair tenancies and inadequate property standards.

These circumstances are unacceptable, especially in the context of COVID-19 when many people are spending more time at home due to formal restrictions or changes in work and study arrangements. Ensuring Queensland renters have a healthy, safe and secure home has never been more important, and it is essential that this Bill is improved to meet its objective to improve housing stability for people renting in the private market.



Make Renting Fair in Queensland recommends that the Bill be amended to include:

1. NO UNFAIR EVICTIONS.

The grounds to end a tenancy, for 'end of a fixed term', must be removed as a matter of priority before the legislation is passed. As it is, the Bill will increase the reasons why renters can be evicted at no fault.

2. ALLOW MINOR MODIFICATIONS.

Being able to personalise and make safe a home is an important reform which should be included. The Bill must allow renters to undertake minor health, safety, accessibility and security modifications without prior approval, and minor amenity and personalisation changes with a short notification.

3. MAKE IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE.

We support the government's proposals around domestic and family violence but they must also include the ability to install security measures without prior consent. This is a vital safety protection for people experiencing DFV.

4. LET RENTERS CHOOSE TO KEEP PETS.

The Bill will go some way to support pets but they will still see renters with pets vetted out at application time, and allow conditions where the average dog or cat must live outside. The Bill must be changed to start with an assumption that renters can keep pets if they choose; require the lessor to seek orders to restrict pets if there is a dispute, and declare any previous pet conditions upfront. We need real change for renters that brings stability and the ability to make a place our home.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide our submission to the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

David Melloy – Tenants Queensland*

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