
From: Alistair Passmore [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 6 July 2021 10:40 PM
To: Community Support and Services Committee
Subject: Submission to the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021

To Committee Secretary,
Community Support and Services Committee

I am writing in regards to the submission of Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, After reading the Bill I have some serious issues with the changes proposed as they simply do not align with what tenants requested during the many consultation periods previously.

The first point I would like to raise is on pets.

I will keep this simple, as this bill should be. Pets should simply be allowed, without questions, except in situations where the existing council or body corporate laws forbid them.

The caveats listed as a reason for lessors to reject an application for pets are far too extensive and in reality will simply result in no change to the existing status quo of lessors being able to blanket ban pets. Under the proposed bill the lessor simply has to say 'The damage caused could exceed the bond amount' and the tenant has no recourse. If a tenant allows their pet to cause damage to the property exceeding the bond, the lessor can simply take civil action to recover those funds, this should not be a valid reason for excluding pets as it will become the de facto reason for refusal as it is possible that a pet, just like a tenant can cause any amount of damage that exceeds the bond.

The bill also does not provide any protections for tenants seeking to take up a new lease, as even if a landlord is not allowed to advertise 'no pets', they can still simply refuse any applicant that includes a pet. This is why the bill needs to be kept simple, with the stance being that all pets are allowed other than in convention with local laws or body corporate laws. It is not for the lessor to decide that their property does not include enough fenced area for a dog, many people keep dogs in apartments and take them daily to local parks for exercise without issue. These are personal responsibilities for the tenant to make decisions on and the landlord should have no input on the matter outside of ensuring their property is returned to a reasonable state at the end of the tenancy.

The second point I would like to raise is in regards to the ending of tenancies.

Once again, this section of the Bill does not meet the expectations of the tenant community. Allowing landlords to simply evict a tenant because they wish their family members to move in is unacceptable, the same stands for ending a tenancy due to sale and many of the other clauses. Without strong laws protecting their right to continue a tenancy, tenants will always need to live in fear of landlords simply ending their agreement and the protections and amendments outlined simply do not go far enough to protect tenants in this regard. In these times a tenant may very well have a reasonable expectation of renting for their entire life and have a reasonable expectation that the property they rent would be the one they live in for decades. It is for this reason tenants are requesting stronger laws regarding ending a tenancy, like in many other countries a tenant should have the ability to renew their lease for as long as they desire with very few exceptions. If the owner of a residential property makes the decision to lease it they need to understand that property will be considered leased for as long as the tenant desires to reside there, and that the property must be sold as 'leased' with those protections remaining indefinitely.

Without strong protections for tenants in this regard tenants will be unable to treat the house they lease as a home, there will be no certainty that each year they will be able to continue to live in their home. Without these protections a rental property is little more than an extended stay hotel service and for the modern use case of a rental property is unacceptable for tenants.

I urge the Committee to really consider the current use case of rental properties from a tenants perspective and adjust their reforms accordingly, these reforms need to bring the QLD rental laws up to a modern standard and reflect the changes in use case for rentals for now and into the future and provide a safe environment to allow the residents of Queensland to grow and prosper, safe in the knowledge that they have stable and secure housing that will meet their needs.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alistair Passmore,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]