
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 30 June 2021 4:07 PM
To: Maiwar 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 Michael Berkman 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.

We were renting a house which did not meet standard living requirements. Faulty locks on doors, backed up sewage system, hot water system for 2 people in a 5 bedroom house, leaking taps etc. Most of these were overlooked, however on some occasions we submitted maintenance reports which were ignored to the point of having to put in a remedy breach. This led to our real estate agent threatening us with violence and ripping up the paper in front of us. The RTS said there wasn't much else that could be done. After months of trying to negotiate with the real estate agent, we were asked to vacate the property once our lease was over without any reason. We had been leaving there for three and a half years.

The house we lived in after that was a reasonable price but had a lot of the same issues. We had a good rapport with this new real estate agent, or so we thought. Every maintenance request we put in was unattended, which the real estate insisted was due to the owner of the house. We lived there for a year, mostly without hot water, locks on the back door faulty, consistent flooding inside the house. When our lease was up for renewal we were told the rent was being raised by \$200 a week. We were not able to afford this ridiculous price increase and had to move house.

The current house we are in is the same. Although a lot more functional, any maintenance requests are gone unanswered for long periods of time. For example, the recent weather caused a tree to fall over causing damage to the fence between us and the neighbours. This was over a month ago and the tree still remains in the yard untouched.

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,

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