
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 30 June 2021 4:26 PM
To: Currumbin 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 Laura Gerber 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 long term (5 year) tenants at [REDACTED]. The owners & in particular the rental Agent was very difficult & unreasonable to deal with, we had to work through the RTA for very basic conversations because of this.

We were given two months notice during the peak of COVID rental market In November 2020 to leave our five year property because the owner wanted to renovate & increase the price for the market. A few months (I think 3 months) prior they wouldn't release us early from the lease agreement when we had a potential new rental in Carool NSW.

The real estate agent we had caused us so much stress and had been so inappropriate and unprofessional. We were denied a full history of our rental ledger, they won't provide a written reference despite agreeing to provide one in conversation, the agent claimed our full bond claiming it was due to the gardens before even inspection the property & denied us access to remedy the situation if she could actually prove anything was wrong (it wasn't because we presented it really well, it was a run down property that we presented well) & I could go on but I will leave it there. During this whole tenancy there was no accountability for the real estate agent & owner for that matter either. We are at a disadvantage because of them.

We attended countless inspections, submitted countless applications which was very stressful & took up so much time (hours per application because no one uses the same platform and they need the most ridiculous amount of

private information about you to apply). At these inspections people from interstate (Sydney & Melbourne for example. As I overheard them) were having bidding wars for the properties I attended offering \$50 - \$200 more per week because they can do their high paying jobs from home. This was so disheartening and devastating as a family cannot compete with this. Agents rarely look up from their clip boards and treat you like a number not a person or family with zero care as to who is suitable for the property or how you are going to find somewhere to live. I have been told countless times to offer 3-6 months rent up front and give our 'best offer' on price which is not only illegal it is morally and ethically wrong.

We were unsuccessful with all of our applications and running out of time so we luckily had some super withdrawn to purchase a caravan to live in. Because our family is in Tasmania and we hadn't seen them in a year due to Covid we ended up travelling south to spend the summer in Tasmania as my husband is a teacher and doesn't have work over that period as well.

We returned to the Gold Coast after Aus day weekend to get the off peak time at Kirra caravan park where we stayed for nearly three months which was good however is \$275 per week and with the storms and rainy season it was very stressful and difficult at times with a young family. We have for the last three months been living at a family members house while they have been travelling as a family in their caravan however they are back on July 8.

We have again been applying for rentals and going to inspections almost daily for months & have found it to be completely stressful, overwhelming and disheartening because the prices are completely greedy, astronomical in comparison to what they are actually worth or should be listed as and there are at times over one hundred other applicants attending for one property. Again we have been suggested to offer months of rent up front and give our best offer. We often have to apply for it prior to the inspection in order to be competitive and it is clear that we have been and continue to be discriminated against for having kids and a small dog as well (undeniable now).

We are again struggling to get a rental and are running out of time. There has been no support from the government despite their actions causing this insane market and no regulation or limits to what can be charged or how applications are managed.

We have lived without a permanent home since we left our last rental in Nov 2020 and there has been no support & everyone I know without a long term rental or owned property is experiencing this as well.

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]