

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 1:11 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.

In 2019 I was renting a 6 person sharehouse with some friends in [REDACTED]. The house had only been rented as a sharehouse and was by no means a palace (i.e. the only stairs from the bottom level to top level was outside). We were never late with our rent and the house was immaculate for inspections - we were ideal tenants. The garage door of the house was slightly dinged by a car. In good faith, we let the agents know and tried to knock the dent out which we did pretty successfully. If we had not pointed it out, there was no way they would have known. Upon the conclusion of our lease, the agents informed us that the owner wanted all of our bond (approx \$3k) to replace the ENTIRE garage door system over this dent. They withheld our bond as as full time uni students, this was financially very hard for us. We ended up settling at mediation and paid \$400 in the end. However, it was such a stressful process where we were bullied by the agents and owners into going above and beyond

what we should have had to repair as tenants. Disgraceful.

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,

