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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 1:12 PM
To: Hinchinbrook 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 Nicholas Dametto MP,

and Community Support and Services Committee,

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.

I've been living in my current property since 2017. It's a 3 bed, 2 bath duplex in [REDACTED]. When I first moved in the advertised rent was \$300pw. Because the rental market in Townsville was so poor at that time, I was able to negotiate down to \$290 a week. I had this lease for two years. When the new lease came the rent went up to \$300 which I felt was completely fair. A year later when my new lease came the rent went up to \$320. I thought was a bit cheeky to have a \$20 increase but I didn't have a big problem with it. In April 2021 I got a call from my real estate informing me that because the market in Townsville was so tight and because the market value in rents had risen my new lease would be now \$370 a week, an increase of \$100 a fortnight. I am fortunate enough to be able to pay my rent however I know of several others who have had a dramatic increase such as mine who cannot afford their rent. My current next door neighbour was paying \$280 in Rosslea. They moved from that property as their increase was to \$350 a week. It's frustrating as the rental market in Townsville seems to swing in extremes; I've been here long enough to see real estate agents and owners beg for renters and I've seen renters outbid the asking price as they're desperate to secure a property.

I understand market pressure but I also think that dramatic increases in rent of this nature are, frankly, greedy.

I am fortunate, however, to have been able to have pets in all the homes I've rented in Queensland.

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]

Wulgurugaba and Bindal Land

[Redacted]