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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 1:29 PM
To: Burleigh 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 Hart 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.

When covid 19 first hit the gold coast over a year ago now my place of business was forced shut. I was asked by head office to move into the building rent free and look after it until we were able to open back up. So that's what I did.

However when we were ready to open little did I know what the rental market was going to be like post lockdown. When I started applying I was applying for a 2 bdrm place for me and my 4 year old son, Only to get knock back after knock back constantly, and already realising how much the cost of rent had risen I was starting to worry that looking for a roof over myself and my sons head was starting to look unaffordable. Nevertheless I started calling realestate agents to ask what more I could do to get ahead as I needed to get myself and my son out of the hostel (the business I run) there advance was to get my application in first, make myself known to the realestate agent, Wright a cover letter, have amazing contactable references, pay money upfront, offer more money on top of the asking price....And you name it I did it! Luckily because I wasn't paying rent at my hostel I was able to save money to offer this to the owners, feeling so sorry for any single parent also needing a roof over there child's head who was most certainly not in a position to be able to do this. as before moving to my hostel I most certainly would not have been able to make offers like I did.

As time was getting on (6 months later)I had still not yet been approved for a property, me and my son were still living at the hostel which was now filling up with homeless Australians because we were not getting the international backpackers I had no choice but to let them in to keep the business going and I was scared!!

While still applying and getting rejected again and again, I started noticing the same properties coming up on the internet which 6 months before use to be in my price range but had now gone up in price again! Not knowing what to do next I moved myself and my son back to my parents house which I was so lucky to be able to do as I know other single parents who where not in a position to be able to do this at all.

Thankfully about 4 months after I moved back to my parents I was able to get a private rental for myself and my son for \$450 pr week from word of mouth. The unit was small and a little expensive but that didn't matter to me I was just so excited to have a place for the 2 of us we could call home especially with my son starting school next year I wanted to be settled and get him enrolled ASAP.

However only 4 months in my landlord told me he will be putting the rent up to \$480 pr week as a lot of other rentals in the area are this price and he wanted the same.

I was gutted! This was now out of my price range and I am again forced to start looking for another roof over our head just in time for school enrolment.

The stress and anxiety of not knowing where to move next and not having a stable home, having to go through the heartache of finding another property and making sure my child has stability before he starts school and now not knowing even where to send my son to school has broken me!

This is a lot for 1 parent to be paying on there own along with phone, internet, electricity bills. The price of groceries and petrol every week, things like car rego, school uniforms, birthdays, Christmas ect and wonderful how 1 single parent who barely gets child support is going to be able to keep up.

Please act now and give us a voice through such hard and uncertain times. Please make a stop and stand up for locals, single parents, the disabled, the elderly and anyone else who can't just go out and work 40-50 hours or get a high paying job to be able to keep up with this and live comfortably with these forever rising rental prices. Help us raise our children in safe secure and stable homes.

Many thanks

[ADD YOUR EXPERIENCES AS A RENTER HERE]

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,