

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 7:01 PM
To: Dianne Farmer
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 Dianne Farmer 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.

I have been renting in Brisbane for 4 years now and have already had a range of bad experiences. When I was 20 and in my first rental sharehouse (with 2 other girls) we were visited by the previous tenants and they warned us about the landlord and all of the ways that he tried to unreasonably claim their bond back. As a full time University student, the thought of losing my bond and realising that our landlord had likely chosen us so that it was easy to take advantage of us, was extremely distressing. Following this, I moved into a sharehouse that was in terrible condition and our requests for repairs were always left unanswered. When we finally decided to leave, the realestate had so much difficulty finding renters willing to accept a house in such poor condition, that they offered it to us for \$50 less per week than we were currently paying. Finding another property to rent in early 2021 was so difficult, and when we finally found a place (after being rejected 8 times), the realestate only offered it after upping the price beyond the advertised price. As our other lease was so close to ending, we had no choice but to pay even more for the rental. Now in this rental, we have requested a pet, but were denied without any explanation. Of course we weren't surprised, but I find it horrible that I am not even allowed to adopt a pet, or make the rental feel like I believe that transformative change in rental laws is necessary in QLD, and I hope that my negative experiences will finally be over.

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,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.