

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 July 2021 7:54 PM
To: Glenn Butcher
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 Glenn Butcher 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 was renting the second unit of a duplex in [REDACTED] until last year when I was given notice to leave without grounds. I was given slightly more than the minimum time required (2 1/2 months) to find a place for myself and my 10 year old twins. I registered to inspect up to 12 rentals a week which met our needs (3 bedrooms, one aircon minimum as my children can get ill easily if they overheat) but up to 10 of those inspections would be canceled before I even had the chance to view the properties. Houses were being rented, sight unseen, to people from outside the region. I was unable to find a rental in the allotted time and a friend kindly offered me two rooms of her house. I have most of my belongings in storage which costs me just as much as a rental would weekly, plus the rent I pay to my friend. My children, now 11 years old, are both going through puberty and have no privacy as they have to share a room. I don't qualify for Dept of Housing because my ex-husband cannot refi

nance the house we bought together under his own name yet as he is also in financial peril.

I continue to apply for rentals but I am rarely considered as I am a single mother on Newstart, unable to work due to severe depression and anxiety which has been heightened by my lack of a home as well as the financial stress.

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]