

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 2 July 2021 8:22 AM
To: Greenslopes 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 Joseph Kelly 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 with [REDACTED] and our hot water system died. I rang up and advised them that it had died and it needed to be replaced. The Property Manager proceeded to tell me that will need to get quotes (fine) and that they will put in a 250L system. I explained to them that a 250L system won't fit in the space as it was only a very small system previously and that a replacement 110 or 125L hot water system would be fine. She then insisted that they don't make them anymore and that the 250L will have to be put in. I explained that they do make hot water systems that are 125L in size and that if they put a 250L system in, it would mean there is no place for our washing machine. To which she explained that it would be up to us to look at getting another washing machine that fit the space.. which is a ridiculous request in that they were expecting us to buy a new \$500+ appliance because they decided to change the permanent structure of our bathroom set up. I

pushed the matter and asked what reimbursment would I get and they decided I was difficult and hung up on me.

I ended up ringing their head office. Got an equally aggressive Property Manager who intially backed up the [REDACTED] Manager and I bluntly explained to her that I was [REDACTED]. I spent 7 and a half years dealing with hot water systems and their insistence that 125L systems are no longer made was a flat out lie or just ignorance.. or just arrogance assuming I was just some lowly renter. Because that was what it came down to.. I was just a renter. I wasn't rude to her. I just knew my rights and she had no time for me.

In the end.. I ended up speaking with the plumber who lo and behold - was able to source a 125L hot water system. Not an apology.. nothing from [REDACTED]. What concerns me is that had this been my elderly mother dealing with this.. she would have been railroaded into having to buy a new washing machine.

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,

