

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 2 July 2021 10:43 AM
To: McConnell 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 Grace Grace 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 living with my partner in a house in red hill that hadn't been legally set up as flats and we didn't renew the lease in our two years there. The owners were reluctant to fix things and we were starting to look around to buy but the market was looking difficult.

At one stage the owners turned up on the day to declare that they were going to finally get a beekeeper in and get rid of the bees in the internal staircase!!!

They also told us that they were thinking of selling the house in the next year. They sent an email giving us two months notice and then when I mentioned that I tried to contact the rta and they had no knowledge of our bond and thus we were there illegally they moved to use the fact they didn't receive correspondence from us about the deck needing maintenance etc to get us to leave earlier. With a form 15. I had to put in a form 12 formally to get them to lodge our bond and they got cross with us for using the system correctly. We were given four weeks to move and my partner and I had to split up the house hold because we couldn't find anywhere to own or rent together. I'm in a share house now and he's bought a one bedroom with not enough space for us both. It's ridiculous that the private owners got away with illegal renting and we had to move so they could auction the house. I've been back and they hadn't done the work required to fix the deck they just sold as is. It was just an excuse to get us to move quickly.

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 black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.