

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 2 July 2021 10:10 PM
To: David Janetzki
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 David Janetzki 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.

As a disabled pensioner with two dogs that are my main and often only companionship, I spend over half my income renting accommodation that is only halfway suitable for my needs. After being abused and taken advantage of by housemates, family, and partners it's barely preferable to live alone in greater poverty than be submitted to further trauma. Less than \$500 a fortnight to be solely responsible for bills and general living expenses is not enough, leaving me unable to afford the medications that work, but are not on PBS (\$200/fortnight.) Public housing wait lists do not prioritise a single disabled person (5 years waiting) nor does NDIS if you don't fit the criteria for SDA or SIL. After moving nine times in five years (due to shoddy landlords and lack of rights regarding neighbours making things unsafe and unbearable) and for the first time since leaving my mother's home I've been able to live in a rental for longer than 12 months. The property is now being sold - week

after week for months I was subjected to inspections while the owner knocked back reasonable offers that didn't satisfy his unreasonable expectations. Now the property is under contract he's been slow with repairs and I'm being encouraged to leave 6 months before my lease ends. Since rent prices have gone up due to Covid job losses I'm yet to see a suitable property I can afford after weeks of searching. I've lived in a shed on a farm with no running water or electricity but plenty of rodents due to lack of options before (which was meant to be an opportunity but was just another person taking advantage of me caring for their animals.) 2021 may be the time I'm finally homeless.

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]