

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 11:19 AM
To: South Brisbane 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 Amy MacMahon 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 had to live in many sub-standard rental properties since moving to Brisbane in 2007. Due to being a sole parent I needed a home that I could afford while also being close enough to transport and amenities, as well as work and childcare (I was dependent on public transport for two years after having my son). I have regularly had over 50% of my income going towards my rent for places that have been:

Small

Uninsulated - freezing in winter and hot in summer) Dangerous neighbours Unmaintained (asbestos, broken stairs, leaking pipes, rotting timber, rust, vermin) Unsecurable (windows and doors) Many times multiple issues would be evident at a single property.

I've also had to battle with real estate agents and owners who have violated entry laws, insisted on cash payments for rent and electricity, harassing behaviour and having bond held. It has been clear on multiple occasions that the owners were driven by their financial greed and with no concern for the well-being of their tenants.

Renting here has been so much more stressful than I could have imagined. The competition for reasonable, well maintained properties is extreme and is not resolved by moving further out from the inner-city.

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.