

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 11:32 AM
To: Noosa 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 Sandra Bolton 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.

Just before Christmas myself, my 67yr old mother and my 3 small children were given notice to leave our rental property at [REDACTED] without grounds

Our agent stated that the owners were moving up from Sydney to occupy the house. They said renovations had already been planned and were to commence the week following our departure.

This was a very difficult moment to start looking for a new place. And we were reluctant to leave our quiet culdersac where my children had grown up for the past 5yrs.. my youngest was actually born in the house.

The rental market was an absolute nightmare, prices in Noosa had gone up 25%. People were paying rent 1yr in advance and as a single parent, I couldn't compete with the rental market.

After a 2mth extension due to extenuating circumstances, we were lucky to be put in touch with a very compassionate agent names [REDACTED]. She had one property that suited us and she allowed us to apply before the property was advertised.

We were approved and moved in as soon as we could.

Upon returning to the Sunrise house the week after the move to check the mail, we saw that there were new tenants, 2 dogs and a car with QLD licence plates. We enquired a little further and realised these people were not the owners, the owners were not moving in, there were no renovations taking place and these people were renting our house for what was probably an inflated figure compared to our \$635 per week.

They lied. They booted out a single mother and her children for more money because there was no regulation in place to protect long term renters.

We would have given them more if they were willing to negotiate as the move placed a lot of anxiety on myself and my mother. But we were never given the chance to stay in our home.

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]

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