
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 2:12 PM
To: McConnel 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.

We are a early 40s professional couple, who cannot have children so we do have a couple of small indoor only cats. We are clean, quiet, and hard-working and have been long-term renters in one of the Woolstores. We were both made redundant during initial COVID and despite this still paid rent.

Since the body corp decided to change building managers late last year, we have been treated like trash. The first weekend after handover, the bin room was literally overflowing. The amenities weren't cleaned for weeks despite COVID increased needs. The previous managers were continually about the place, and knew most of us by name. They were clearly invested in creating a healthy community - these new ones are absent and rude when present.

We had an electrical issue in our bathroom (a wet space) after the neighbours did some renovations - it took 4 weeks for the building manager to even acknowledge our request for help. They told us to 'change the light bulb' when in fact it was an issue in the wall.

Our lease came due for renewal soon after and the building manager then hounded us, saying the rent would dramatically jump. When we asked if the owner wanted us to in order to sell (it is a hot market, we would understand), the building manager, not the owner told us to get out and that renewal was no longer an issue. Despite this, our place was listed for rent the next day and since then they have held unapproved open houses with multiple parties of people, no COVID tracking and walking through our home.

We may only pay rent, but it is where we live and we love it. I'm happy to pay a very decent rent for a nice place - and I'm okay not to buy to be honest. I don't know where work may take us in the future and so we choose to continue to rent. But when I'm here, it's my life and it is unreasonable to be harassed one minute and ignored the next. We have been blocked from being able to actually contact the owner directly so are stuck dealing with these crappy inbetweeners who obviously don't care about the building.

In looking for a new home, we have issues finding a place that will take two cats - which is ridiculous. These guys are cleaner than some of my friends' (dearly loved but truth be told) children. We just want to be in a decent building that won't collapse around us, that offers some privacy and comfort when we are away from work, and is safe and secure and affordable. We both make well above the ABS listed mean and still struggle to save. It would be nice if we were valued a bit more.

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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