
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 3:53 PM
To: Mark Bailey
Cc: Community Support and Services Committee; Minister for Communities and Housing
Subject: To Community Support and Services Committee (CC Mark Bailey 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 Mark Bailey MP,

Dear the Community Support and Services Committee, cc Mark Bailey

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 new resident of Moorooka, my flatmate and I were excited to move into the 3 bedroom duplex that came with air conditioning in the two major bedrooms and the living room. They worked for the first few months of our lease (we moved in in January) and then mid-winter we had a warm snap and I tried them and they had stopped working. I reported this to our real estate agent in July. In September we had still heard nothing and I contacted the real estate again about the lack of air conditioning. Then I was contacting them every month as the weather warmed up, and my chronic illness, which is heat sensitive, was becoming harder and harder to manage. I had stopped working in the December due to my condition becoming so bad I couldn't even work part time, and that was in air conditioning. My flatmate was also suffering, though she is able bodied. The house had no ceiling fans, no natural flow of air and was situated on the western side so it was pounded with sun and heat for mont

hs on end. Pedestal fans barely improved the living conditions as the house was so hot. I became so disabled I was barely able to grocery shop for myself. I was taking cold baths and struggling to even get out of the bath. Life was unbearable. As the real estate continued to not require the landlord to fix what we were paying for, I finally, more than six months after I first reported the broken air conditioning, (because I was afraid they would make things even worse) submitted for a dispute resolution to the residential tenancy association. We refused to sign our least renewal until the air conditioning was fixed. The very same day that the RTA finally contacted the real estate about their lack of action, the landlord decided that was enough reason to kick us out, and cancelled our lease. We had two months to find somewhere new. In that time the air conditioning was still broken. So for ten months we lived in a house where the air conditioning was known to be broken and ha

d been reported, we were paying rent that included the premium you pay for having air conditioning, and we were suffering to the point of severe illness. We eventually found a better place to move to with a real estate agent and landlord who get things fixed quickly. But this is the reality for renters. The RTA couldn't help us, because the landlord could just kick us out. We had six months to try and claim some money back from the landlord, which we didn't do because I was so unwell from the months of extreme heat and then the stress of moving I was bed bound and barely able to function for more than six months. The landlord then dumped the real estate that knew that the

air conditioning didn't work and went with a new agent, and didn't get the a/c fixed, but the rental ad said that it had a/c. Our former neighbour went to the open house and told the agent that the a/c didn't work, which they didn't believe. But sure enough none of the a/c worked so the place was taken off

the market and urgent repairs were done before it was listed again. Landlords and real estate agents should be held to a stricter standard, that facilities that are being provided and paid for should be working. Renters who go to the RTA shouldn't be afraid that they will be kicked out because they have complained. This was a horrible experience for me and set me back considerably in my recovery.

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,

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