
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 3 July 2021 4:32 PM
To: Clayfield 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 Timothy Nicholls 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've been renting in Brisbane for almost 5 years now.

In two separate houses we had issues flooding, either by weather or broken plumbing.

This led to damaged ceilings, soggy carpets and days where all we could do was wring out towels to prevent further damage.

We raised the issues with the [REDACTED] at the time and the response from the owner was abysmal. Any serious fix to remedy an issue was never considered.

In the worse case, they refused to clean carpets that had been completely flooded with dirty water, and our damaged wall and ceiling were left unfixed for almost 6 months.

Afterwards when we left, they refused to release our bond without paying for professional carpet cleaning, and tried to also blame us for paint damage to the wall that had been soaked by an unsealed bathroom above.

That particular rental property was empty for less than a week before new tenants moved in. Everyone who attended the inspection was desperate for a place, so despite the owner doing ZERO maintenance AND raising the rent again, it was snapped up immediately. The next month we had incredible amounts of rain, and I have no doubt those new tenants got flooded too.

In every place I've rented, wear and tear is never addressed or considered by the owner, and somehow blamed on you for existing there.

Repairs are delayed until you move away, or done horribly by the owners favourite dodgy guy, which breaks again next year.

In our newest place, [REDACTED] has already made it clear the owner doesn't want to spend anything, despite us paying them the highest rent we've ever paid. There is still damage from the previous tenants to walls and doors that was promised to be fixed before we moved in - completely untouched 6 months later.

Renters have no power to bargain or ask for more right now. Despite always taking care of gardens, cleaning and receiving great feedback from property managers, we've only experienced bad landlords who seem to treat us with contempt.

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 black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.