
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 4 July 2021 5:51 PM
To: Cooper 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 Jonty Bush 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.

As a mum and wife in a small family of three, I stress nearly everyday whats happening next; especially now with the state of the world. We need to move in a few short months, and uncertainty looms everyday on how this is going to happen. My work dried up through COVID and I decided to study and change career paths, start a business. My husband who was studying at the time put his degree on hold and has eventually found a job, we still live below the poverty line; I rely on a centrelink payment, which is sometimes as low as \$50 a fortnight and I have to jump through all the hoops just for that. We are competing in a rental market with all these people who have decided to move to Queensland because it seems safer here than in their own states. So available properties have decreased as the months go by, prices seem to be going up as well, because demand is high.

Our little family has a combined income of around \$750-\$900 p/w(varies each week), this is not enough for a family to live off with the rental prices so high, we get \$165 p/f in rent assistance, thats \$82.50 a week. We currently live in The Gap with our son starting high school this year at The Gap State High, as I mentioned earlier, we have to move in September as the property we rent has sold. With prices so high in this area, we were lucky to find in the first place a house so cheap, we pay \$350 a week here, its the oldest most run down place, but we learnt to love it. Even with rent so cheap we don't really get by, this week we had to pay rego, using half our grocery money and phone bill money, with the bills piling up behind us. We seem to be always paying this and that late and suffering late fee's and disconnections, like my phone will be this week. We cant afford to get the internet and I hotspot from my phone to do my study. My husband needs the car to get to wor

k, so paying our rego has to happen. We live a very low-fi life, we don't do T.V streaming and have all the extras people get pulled into, we want to be a progressive family with a healthy lifestyle.

We now have to consider moving to an outer suburb and are also considering moving in with another small family in the same situation as our own. That means pulling our kids out of their schools and starting again, which is a big cost

in itself. I am not sure if you know the real estate guidelines of making sure your rent is lower than 50% of your income, at this stage we wouldn't be able to find anywhere...

I have a story besides this one, when I was very young I rented an apartment with my oldest son, this was in 1999, I paid \$130 in rent, I received only a slightly lower rent assistance all those years ago. Then about 11 years ago while looking for a new rental I found my old apartment on the market, it had not changed one bit, the rent they were asking was over \$400, this made me look into rent assistance and see how much that had jumped up, it hadn't really. It makes me question how a society still lives when they aren't being supported to even get by. Now I need that support and where do I turn? These questions have been on my mind all these years, the cost of living has increased so much, it's unbelievable but wages and income support has stagnated for

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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