
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 5 July 2021 11:39 AM
To: Leeanne Enoch
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 Leeanne Enoch 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 am a twenty-year-old mother of a wonderful 16-month-old son. I stand with many, many other young parents and families who are no where near the financial threshold of building or buying a property. For me, a rental property is my only option of having some where to call "Home". As fortunate as I am to be able to have my own housing during this debacle of a "rental crisis" in Queensland, it is rather hard to call my house a home when I am limited to "hanging one picture frame or decor piece per wall, and if any damages are made by the hooks, I am to repair and repaint the whole room". I am guessing that this is my real estate agents and land-lords idea of "fair", but to me, it seems utterly ridiculous. Any person with a family, any mother or father with children they adore would understand how insane that pathetic 'meet-me-halfway' statement is, surely? Unfortunately, although many people may understand and share my frustration, nothing is being done. After feeling intimidated by that response, I haven't pursued asking 'permission' to install any safety-necessary things like furniture or TV anchors, despite my son becoming more active and adventurous. I had a family member put in a baby gate to prevent my son from getting into the kitchen, where he can now reach the gas stove and open the oven, and after reading my apparent "rights" under the RTA I have chosen NOT to 'warn' or 'ask permission' from the real estate or land-lords of my decision as this is deemed something that is to assist in safety, which, I am within my rights to do.

House inspections shouldn't feel nerve-racking, and yet, they do. I feel like I can't have anything less than a display home standard prepared for the agent when they walk in the door, especially when photos are taken of places like my walk in robe, filled with personal belongings. Its hard for it not to make me sick to my stomach, wondering whether or not how I chose to live inside somewhere that is supposed to be my "home" is up to someone else's, a stranger at that, standards. It's hard for me not to triple check everything, schedule the inspection for a day when my son is at daycare, so that there aren't even breakfast dishes left on the bench, because God forbid I end up with a notice telling me I am not able to re-sign my lease in a time like this. Unfortunately, that's the reality for two of my closest friends who also have a young child the same age as my son. Now I watch her, struggling to find a house to accommodate her young family, simply for living in their home rather than going out of their way to have unrealistic self standards and because selfish landlords want to increase the rent beyond what they are able to with a consistent and ongoing tenant.

When will a line be drawn? When will people have to stop worrying about being evicted from somewhere for simply wanting to be able to feel at home in a house, that they are indeed paying to occupy, not to mention, paying ridiculous amounts for at this stage? It's about time something is done about the rental crisis and unfairness that has been circulating for far too long now.

[REDACTED]

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.