
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 6 July 2021 8:50 AM
To: Stirling Hinchliffe
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 Stirling Hinchliffe 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.

Back in late 2019 - 2020 my partner and I were renting and the owners decided they would like to sell their property. It took 6 months - 1 year to then sell this property, as it was actually an illegal residence with 2 tenants under the one tenancy. The downstairs was in bad condition and the woman who lived there had to duck to walk through her own house.

Anyway, upon trying to sell the property we endured inspections every single weekend, for the entire 6-12 months. As we had dogs we had to arrange to get them and us out of the house every single Saturday for almost one year.

Upon finally selling the house, the new owners did everything they could to get us to move out.

They would come and do 'maintenance' on the property every weekend after they bought it, with no warning. The real estate said they would be here between 9am - 5pm in one single email they sent out when they had first purchased the property, so we would have no idea when they would be coming.

On one Sunday, they came to chop down a tree in front of our house (with absolutely no warning). They then proceeded to block our cars in for 3-5 hours with, once again, no warning, not even a knock on our door. They blocked our cars in and walked all over our roof with their chainsaws, distressing us and our dogs for up to 4 hours.

Might I add, this all happened through the height of the pandemic, while our neighbours also decided it would be a good time to get 20 trade workers to do work on their house next door while we were all locked down around it.

The owners eventually just gave us a notice to leave and I know I couldn't have been more happier. Ever since I have had to rent as an adult in Queensland it has made my life un-enjoyable and stressful.

I have little hope for my future as a renter.

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,

