
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 7 July 2021 7:26 AM
To: Scott Stewart
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 Scott Stewart 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 single woman in her late 50s who missed the mortgage/home ownership boat. I live alone but unfortunately I have a dog, which as a tenant is similar to having covid & ebola combined in terms of applying for rentals. Other states have made it easier to rent with pets, why can't Queensland? Labor in Victoria led the way on that reform.

Also, my RE tells me when they will be inspecting my home. In Qld I have no right to be present at that inspection. In other states I would have the right to be present while the property manager riffles through my underwear drawer searching for "damage". I have to take a morning off work because the RE refuses to schedule inspections on Mondays when I am not at work. Negotiation is impossible because as a tenant I am powerless. My boss is dirty on me for taking time off - she does not believe me when I say the RE will not reschedule. She does not understand how it feels to be caught between protecting my privacy by being present at inspections and protecting my employment. In Qld tenancy law is heavily weighted in favour of landlords. Tenants can be evicted for no reason at all. I live in fear of that happening to me. It's time for reforms that give tenants more security & dignity.

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,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]