
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 7 July 2021 3:43 PM
To: Ninderry 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 Daniel Purdie 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 became unwell "allegedly" due to a sanitising chemical in the workplace - and had to stop working in March 2015 because of this

I had worked and supported myself and my family up until this point – and also five extra children who needed care over varying time frames had lived in my home

While grateful for government assistance now I was not working,, I was unable to afford rent – and at this stage I was only renting a room within someone's house

While at the height of my illness, I was required to lean heavily on friends to stay at their houses – and then spent two nights sleeping in my car at 55 years of age

I then lived in a share house full of foster children and international students - my daughter had to pay my rent so that I could live in this crowded scenario

I was also at this stage required to initiate legal action to attempt to get the dollars required for the private medicine needed. This legal action is still ongoing so medical attention has been very limited as the conventional avenues have literally nothing to offer

After 18 blessed months in the share house I was once again homeless and stayed with a couple in their 70-80s for six months. Mission Australia knocked on the door one evening collecting money for homeless youth and the ensuing discussion, of course, involved this homeless woman

In June 2018 I moved into public housing. As the registration on my car and a few other bills were due at this same time, The Salvation Army and the neighbourhood free pantries literally fed me for three months until I could afford food again

Soon after (and 3.5 years after stopping work) I was granted the disability pension – I found out later this was 18 months after I became eligible for it. At the 2-yr mark, Centrelink had pushed me to apply for jobs I could not physically do anymore but never told me I was eligible to apply for disability

I have now had this stable accommodation at a price I can afford from my disability pension for 3 years

No one should be having such experiences in Australia

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]