
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 7 July 2021 5:09 PM
To: Mark Furner
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 Mark Furner 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've rented for over a decade now. The likelihood of owning a home here in Brisbane looks unlikely for me, and as such I think I'm likely to be a renter my whole life.

My current landlord is the best I've ever had. She lets us keep our dog, helps with minor and major maintenance in a timely manner and is even upgrading the house to have solar, getting rid of the gas stove which I really appreciate as an asthmatic. Earlier in the year she installed Air Conditioning and went so far as to suggest that she could install a second one if it was needed.

We certainly kissed some frogs before finding our princess though!

I've had landlords who; when maintenance was requested on broken tiles, simply taped cardboard over them (creating a tripping hazard); who asked for exorbitant amounts out of our bond for a patch of grass to be replaced. One apartment I lived in had a line of trees along the side, which acted to cool the unairconditioned apartment. After a window was broken on the second floor apartment, they cut all of the trees down, making our ground floor apartment almost unlivable; there were nights when the bedrooms were 36 degrees, and when we requested air conditioning be installed we were told to be grateful, as the apartments above ours were even hotter, and they couldn't possibly install it for one apartment, because then everyone would want it!

I haven't even started on the house where our request for a fix to our hot water system was ignored and then deleted, leaving the house without hot water for a week, during which the property manager abused my housemate on the phone for daring to request the maintenance while the landlord was uncontactable overseas. This house had not been bond cleaned before we moved in, and one of the toilets did not work.

If this can happen to young professionals wanting to rent in inner city Brisbane, imagine how much younger people in more precarious work could be taken advantage of. In your electorate there are a huge amount of renters who deserve to have the basic dignity of a home without feeling intimidated by property managers or fear or being "soft" evicted at the end of their lease.

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]