
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 7 July 2021 6:49 PM
To: Toohey 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 Peter Russo 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 moved to a new rental in Stones Corner in 2018 where I couldn't get electricity connected for 3 days as all the copper wiring had been "harvested". The property manager didn't believe me until they were able to reinsert the property on the 3rd day. The back door (hollow, intended for indoor use) was punched through during a break and enter. It took over 4 weeks to be replaced. The issues at this property was endless.

I lived in a rental in Bardon in 2014 where the 80 year old landlord would do his own plumbing and electricity repairs. He would arrive randomly without notice. I would need to leave the property everytime he attempted repairs as I was afraid he would end up killing himself. For example, using a chainsaw on a bench placed on a wheelie bin and retaining wall.

I was able to negotiate with this landlord about keeping a kitten I rescued while at this property. He threatened to kick me and my husband out if we kept the kitten. We ended up paying an extra \$50 to keep one small kitten at the property. He stated this would cover the costs of damages at the end of lease. At the time I worked as a house cleaner which greatly offended me.

I rented in Kangaroo Point between 2015-2017 where the also 80 something year old landlord would turn up unannounced. I was in the shower and found the man in my kitchen. His family also let themselves in to evaluate the property unannounced. Another incident which caused me plenty of stress at this property, the property manager tried to charge me \$330 to remove a housemate's name from the lease. By law they are able to charge a "reasonable" fee to do this. This is totally subjective what reasonable is. This property was located on [REDACTED]

where exhaust fumes would settle on our kitchen bench and plates (open cupboards). There was very poor ventilations, no ceiling fans, exhausts or air-conditioning.

While I rented in Townsville over 10 years ago when I was 21 I lost my bond after Cyclone Yasi destroyed the property. The landlord advised me I didn't do enough to protect the property even though I and the rest of the tenants were evacuated by the army. I was bullied until I gave in.

Renting in Queensland caused me plenty of unnecessary anxiety. It had made me feel less than human plenty of times in my 13 years of renting.

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]