
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 8 July 2021 12:06 AM
To: Greenslopes 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 Joseph Kelly 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.

For one and half years myself and two of my current housemates had to live in a terrible property as it was the only place we could afford as university students and the only place that gave us the chance to live there. While there we had to live with up to four others but even with so many people the onus of cleaning out shared spaces was left to only myself and the two people I ended up moving out with. The rooms were incredibly small with at least two rooms on the property having no windows leading outside and therefore no ventilation. Several rooms including the kitchen, bathroom, and at least one bedroom had mild growth that have one of my housemates respiratory issues and may have risked the health of her pet bird. One of our housemates would routinely leave his cooking on the stove unattended even after we asked him several times to take more care, on at least one occasion the pot caught on fire while he was out of the room. If we had reported this behaviour to our landlord this would've risked making him homeless as all the people living in that house did so because they couldn't find anywhere else. For almost the entire time we lived there one of my windows had missing glass due to storm damage and I had to have it covered up with cardboard, upon moving out this was not fixed. All the windows were difficult to impossible to open and close reliably leading to spiders, leaves, and moisture to accumulate in my bedroom. One of my housemates had a pane of glass missing from her bedroom when she moved in and despite asking the landlord multiple times to fix it (it was both a privacy concern and creating a risk of her bird escaping) the pane was still missing upon us moving out. The fire alarms in that house were also consistently faulty with many going off in the middle of the night for no apparent reason. While myself and my two friends now live in a much safer property it is alarming to say the least that we had to live in the previous property out of necessity and were only able to secure our current unit after a year of us wanting to moving out and searching for a new home.

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,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.