
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 8 July 2021 10:48 AM
To: South Brisbane 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 Amy MacMahon 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.

My partner and I had just moved interstate to Queensland in 2015 when we had our first child. We lived in a rental in Paddington that was not the best quality house, but we made it our home.

There were some significant problems with the property, including a blocked sump under the house that attracted mosquitos, and faulty gutters that caused water to sheet down the inside wall in heavy rain.

Since the faulty gutters prohibited us from putting anything of value near that particular wall, we politely requested that the gutters be fixed. Within days of our request, we were informed by the real estate agent that our lease would not be up for renewal after it expired.

Since our baby was only 5 months old, and since we had no support network in Brisbane as we had just moved to Queensland from interstate, we pleaded with the real estate agent to show us some compassion, or at the very least tell us why we were not able to renew our lease. No reason was forthcoming, but it became obvious from our communication that the owner simply wanted a tenant who was less likely to request essential maintenance.

We negotiated one extra month to allow us more time to find another home, and thankfully we found one at the last minute. But it would be an understatement to say that moving house with a 5 month old was difficult.

In its current form, the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 will do little to improve the situation of renters faced with the scenario that we were. 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 area.