
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 8 July 2021 6:07 PM
To: Maiwar 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 Michael Berkman 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.

We have had a very challenging tenancy in our recent lease at [REDACTED] a semi-renovated Queenslander originally built in 1910. Though this home is full of character and charm, it is evident that the landlord has neglected basic upkeep to this home that has caused initially small inconveniences to turn into full fledged concerns. Due to the lack of insulation and lack of sufficient sealing, we have had to deal with ongoing pest issues that were not taken seriously until easily 6 months into our year long tenancy. We had a cockroach infestation that would see us killing anywhere between 10-30 cockroaches a day before we finally had the landlord organize pest control 6+ months into our tenancy while having to deal with these conditions on a daily basis. We additionally had a rat infestation where we humanely captured 7 rats in the span of 5 days in our upstairs bathroom at which the landlord did nothing to support our needs with this issue, ie: repairing the holes these rats were climbing through behind our cupboard in the bathroom or to even bring out pest control again to help mitigate these issues.

As we have been waiting easily three months to have the water pressure and pipes fixed/replaced in our home, the landlord took priority to hire painters/deck varnishing workers to work nonstop for 3 weeks fixing up the external appearance of our house only weeks before we moved out of the property. We were given no notice that these workers were to arrive at our property and that they would be commencing their invasive work between 6:00am - 7:00am for weeks on end. Work included constant knocking to request access to specific areas of the home including personal bedroom windows as we had to get ready for our day, loud scrapping against the wooden boards that are the same ones linked to our internal spaces, no masks being worn as they worked through the windows with their hands reaching inside our space to adjust the blinds during Brisbane's recent lockdown causing stress to us as we tried to remain isolated by the request of our state authorities. The tenants of this property are primarily made up of casual customer service and hospitality workers, we are often working late night shifts and had our lifestyle and overall mental/physical/emotional health severely impacted by the inconsiderate ongoing construction and maintenance of the home without receiving our consent as the tenants having to live through these disruptions on a daily basis. As this house is centrally situated beside [REDACTED] (a consistently busy road leading to the main access point to the western suburbs), Taringa train station and [REDACTED], the lack of insulation and ventilation has resulted in the house to feel like all the windows and doors are fully opened due to the extent of noise it registers and the amount of dust we are constantly having to clean that causes our asthma and allergies to persist throughout the seasons.

We additionally have had to deal with a disruptive, aggressive and inconsiderate neighbour who has made our entire home feel extremely uncomfortable and unsafe in their behaviour and the type of language they have used throughout our tenancy to describe their racist, homophobic and xenophobic views on the pandemic, the elections

and general comments about life. This neighbour, along with the nonstop game of Jumanji challenges the house has thrown our way have been the main reasons we could no longer call this property 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 black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.