
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 8 July 2021 11:18 PM
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.

When my partner and I first moved in together, we rented a house in Annerley. The first night in the house, the safety switch tripped and we lost electricity. This happened every day despite us removing appliances to figure out the cause. We eventually got an electrician in; we'd waited because if it was our fault we'd have to pay for the visit. Turns out the shower was leaking through the floor into a Powerpoint under the house. The electrician disconnected the PowerPoint and recommended to the landlord that the shower be fixed and PowerPoint reconnected. The shower was never fixed properly; multiple people came to add silicone to the shower, each recommended to the landlord that silicone alone wouldn't fix the issue, and that more work was required. This never happened. For the 9 months we lived there, we had to run an extension lead through the bathroom window to run the washing machine, meaning our house was never secure.

The final straw was when the toilet blocked up. We called the emergency plumber as it was a long weekend, after spending around \$100 at the hardware store on plungers and ogres and chemicals (again, if it was our fault we'd need to pay). The plumber said tree roots had grown through the sewer in the backyard. He suggested to try not to use too much toilet paper until it was fixed. The owner refused to fix the issue, as they planned to demolish the house at the end of our tenancy. We tried to negotiate a rent reduction, considering we didn't have a fully functioning toilet, and they suggested \$15 per week off our rent. We managed to break the lease and move out. The property is still being rented out.

In its current form, the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 will do little to improve the situation of 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 solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.