
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 9 July 2021 7:14 PM
To: Glass House 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 Andrew Powell 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 moved to Maleny (hinterland of the sunshine coast) area about 8 years ago, after looking for several months I moved into a granny flat for \$300 per week (this is almost two thirds of my income being on Disability support payment for long term illness), my first problem was that my landlord, would go into my flat when I was not there and the realestate agent knew about it and ignored it. He was also outside my flat, either to the sides of the flat or the front door on a regular basis, to do gardening or to visit, I basically had no privacy. this tenancy ended when they wanted to put up the rent significantly, and they required me to sign a 12 month lease. The next place I moved into was also \$300 a week. I moved in and it was a nightmare. the tank water was so stagnant the whole granny flat had a strong odour, There was this slime and dead cockroaches in the kitchen cupboards, there was no gas and so no hot water! The realestate agent would drive past on her way home from work to spy on tenants, if you parked in a non-designated spot you would get breached and if your grass got over 8 cm you would get breached. This tenancy also ended because the realestate agent wanted to put up the rent and it was unaffordable. Due to lack of availability of housing I then moved into a caravan park, where the management hadn't even heard of tenancy law and would accuse the responsible adults that lived there of all sorts of rubbish and just evict tenants willy nilly. He had a system of allowing some tenants a reduced rent if they would watch other tenants and report back to him. I am still there but have been evicted because they want to put in cabins illegally ie. without council approval...Rents in this area are now around \$400 a week to live alone. I am trying to share with others but there are very few rentals here and they are very expensive. So basically I am on the verge of homelessness like a very large number of people in this area, Almost everyone who rents in this area is being evicted or have the threat of being evicted over them. They cannot find another rental because other people are moving to the area and are offering more rent than the advertised price...I am an educated woman who used to work in the community sector but due to long-term illness have not been able to buy a house and so have to rent, it is as simple as that. I know all this sounds far fetched and unbelievable but it is the truth, it is basically what happens when there is gentrification in an area and rentals become in short supply and very expensive. But it is more than gentrification of an area, the situation for renters has become impossible across the board... due to a lack of care from government towards one third of the population ie. people who rent. are living in inhumane circumstances.

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.