
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 10 July 2021 3:23 PM
To: Shannon Fentiman
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 Shannon Fentiman 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 was a tenant of [REDACTED] for some seven months between 03/01/2020 and 13/07/2020. I broke my thirteen month lease early because of the condition of the property.

To view the property as a prospective tenant, it looked very good. It was clean and seemed in good condition. Regrettably, it was not as it appeared. The large extension to the side of the kitchen had been constructed improperly. The decking boards used for the floor were put in upside down, the louvers were inoperable, the roof leaked, the window frames were rotten, and there was mould in the ceiling.

The mould spread throughout the roof in the entire property, making itself known on the ceiling of almost every room. There was also wiring that was done improperly under the house. Downstairs could not be secured at all. The fence shared with the downhill neighbour was falling down. And the concrete driveway was crumbling to dust.

It was almost impossible to get the landlord to approve any repairs, and the property manager, who was my only point of contact, was incredibly unhelpful. When I was offered a chance to break my lease, I jumped at it. My current residence is far better, if still frustratingly mouldy. It saddens me that I will almost certainly never be able to buy a home, and so will rent for the rest of my life.

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.