
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 12 July 2021 4:06 PM
To: Mark Bailey
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 Mark Bailey MP,

Dear the Community Support and Services Committee,

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 currently rent a small house with our dog. We are saving to buy our own place. Unfortunately, between my work being contract-based and skyrocketing house prices (thanks to legislation that treats housing like an investment opportunity for the already-wealthy instead of a basic human right), that dream is still a little while off.

At the end of this year our lease is up. The possibility that we could be faced with a no grounds evictions is a cause for concern and stress for us. We love this house, we love this suburb. We're model tenants - we take care of the house and we are always ahead on our rent. Yet we could still be evicted.

We know that with vacancy rates being what they are, finding a new rental for us and our dog could be very difficult. And as two full-time working professionals, we know that we will have it easier than some. In fact, we once went to a rental inspection where the real estate agent said they were glad we had an 'anglo-sounding name'. It makes me sick to think that real estate agents may discriminate against people based on their cultural background.

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,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]