
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 13 July 2021 9:57 AM
To: South Brisbane 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 Amy MacMahon 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.

Renting in Queensland and especially since the beginning of the pandemic is highly stressful and fraught. Having lived, studied, worked and rented in Queensland for the best part of a decade I feel like my experience is not unique.

On all my leases, real estate agents have expected incredibly quick responses to their requests but regularly fail to respond to tenants' concerns with the same efficacy. This includes emergency repairs to bathrooms (can't wash and bathe), stoves and ovens that stopped working (can't cook) and general requests to fix unsafe parts of the house, such as mould, rotting back stairs and unlock-able doors.

The best example I have of how poor tenants' rights are in Queensland is from a good friend of mine. One room in their house was called the mould room because the infestation was so bad it was growing on three walls and the ceiling. When requesting their landlord remove the mould, their response was to keep the door closed.

As more Queenslanders become unable to enter the housing market, strong rental reforms to support long term renters is a non-negotiable.

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.