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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 13 July 2021 10:37 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.

I am a doctor and have been renting now for the last 9 years, moving almost every year as part of my job. During that time I have had 1 (one) year where my life hasn't been significantly impacted by rental concerns. In the past these issues have included being threatened to be evicted because white carpet at the entrance to a house was seen to be dirty (it was the main thoroughfare through a 7 person house) - I was forced to buy a carpet runner out of my own money in order to preserve the carpet. Attempts to involve the RTA just got stuck in disputed claims which the real estate handballed back and forth and then threatened to add me to rental blacklists if I didn't buy the carpet runner.

One real estate agency saw a cat (not ours) in the yard while doing an inspection. They took a photo of it and at the end of the tenancy used that photo and the lack of power that the RTA have to withhold our bond until we got the house pest cleaned. We never had any animals.

One house had a retaining wall holding that became overgrown with weeds belonging to the house above (on land plots we sourced from the council and surveyors) We had to pay to get it cleaned by a professional because it was too dangerous for us to do ourselves (think 2-3 storey at >50' slope). We had to do this because the real estate refused to listen to our emails about the issue building over the year and then at bond claim they claimed our bond as a result of this. It wasn't even part of their property. The RTA was powerless unless we went to QCAT which would have been impossible because as above I move every year for work and can't attend the court hearings.

Every year for the last 9 years we have been faced with a no grounds / end of tenancy agreement with subsequent price hike as the only alternative option. Real estates know that it costs thousands to move every year - all they have to do is make the price hike less than the cost of moving and it's worth it to stay.

As a renter for the last 9 years and likely coming years I have felt completely powerless to do anything while living in a rental when faced with issues. This has been especially compounded this year with the difficulty of finding rentals because of price hiking -- I have been forced this year to engage in this same practice in order to secure my rental property. The real estate agent told us that if we wanted to secure the property someone had already offered to give \$30/week extra... and if we wanted it we would have to beat it. This happened at every single rental I went to at the start of this year. Eventually we ended up paying \$50 more a week as a result of bidding wars and desperate renters. We are just lucky that we have the money to do this -- there are a lot of renters who don't have our income.

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.