



Australian Citizens Party

Craig Isherwood, National Secretary

PO Box 376, COBURG, VIC 3058

Phone: 1800 636 432 **Email:** info@citizensparty.org.au **Web:** citizensparty.org.au

MEDIA RELEASE

21 November 2019

Stop the rot—take control of the Big Four banks!

Westpac's 23 million money laundering breaches is the latest evidence that Australia's too-big-to-fail banks have become vast criminal enterprises.

For years Scott Morrison, as both Prime Minister and Treasurer, his government, and its predecessor governments have protected these banks from scrutiny, accountability and justice, as they committed crimes, preyed on and gouged their customers, and engaged in reckless and fraudulent financial dealings which built up the biggest domestic and foreign debt bubbles in Australian history, centred in mortgage lending.

Their actions have done untold damage to Australia and Australians, and have pushed the economy to the brink of catastrophe.

This situation demands the government step in, take the banks over and clean them out.

The current government, however, is run as a bank protection syndicate around Scott Morrison, Josh Frydenberg, Jane Hume and their accomplices in Treasury, APRA, ASIC and the RBA.

This gang rigged the royal commission's terms of reference to shield the banks from real changes, secretly rammed through the 2018 "bail-in" law to be able to seize deposits to prop them up if and when their recklessness causes them to fail, and have cooked up a law to ban cash transactions over \$10,000—for starters—to trap people in banks so everything we do can be monitored and so we can't escape bail-in and the extreme monetary-policy desperation of negative interest rates.

In other words, the same gang that protects criminality in the banks is turning law-abiding citizens into criminals just for using cash, and on a total lie—the government claims that it is to combat tax evasion and money laundering in the "black economy", but once again we see the real black-economy perpetrators are the big banks and big auditing firms, like Westpac and its auditor PwC, which defy existing laws to launder money on a massive scale.

Honest MPs must overthrow this gang's regime and use the power of Parliament to enact policies that completely overhaul the banking system.

Most importantly, as a scandal like this proves, the government needs its own national bank, like the original Commonwealth Bank was, especially from 1943 to 1959 when the Commonwealth Bank also tightly regulated the private banks.

In the Westpac case, if the government applied the law equally based on the CBA precedent, which was fined \$700 million for 53,700 AML breaches, it would have to fine Westpac more than \$300 billion for its 23 million breaches. (If fined the maximum per breach, it would be over \$300 trillion!)

As its market capitalisation is \$92 billion, a \$300 billion fine would wipe Westpac out, but anything less makes a joke of the law.

With a national bank staffed by banking experts, the government could take over Westpac and its management, and protect its depositors, customers, payment systems and important business services, so the law could be applied with minimal disruption to the economy.

The Citizens Party (formerly Citizens Electoral Council) has drafted legislation for a national bank, called the Commonwealth National Credit Bank, which would give the government this emergency capacity and also be a powerful regulator of the banking system.

The Citizens Party has drafted other bills, which would also be effective in resolving this Westpac crisis, and the serious problems in the banking system more generally. The bills include:

- The [Banking System Reform \(Separation of Banks\) Bill 2019](#), introduced by Bob Katter MP in the House of Representatives in 2018 and by Pauline Hanson in the Senate in February 2019, which enacts a Glass-Steagall separation of the banks to stop them from being too big to fail and from using customers' deposits for financial gambling, and establishes much tighter parliamentary control over APRA so it is forced to regulate properly;
- The Australian Banks (Government Audit) Bill 2019, to be introduced in the House of

Representatives on Monday next week, 25 November, by Bob Katter, which requires the Auditor-General to take over the auditing of the major banks from the disreputable Big Four auditing firms, which have a track record of covering up bank crimes and financial recklessness, and directs the Auditor-General to dig deep into the areas of the banks' books that are used to hide risks.

Under the Morrison regime, the government sabotaged a Senate inquiry into the Glass-Steagall Separation of Banks Bill, and it will also oppose the government audit bill, but the question is what will honest Liberals and Nationals and the Labor Party do in the face of these never-ending criminal banking scandals?

Will they be complicit in protecting banking crimes, or will they finally start to stand up to the banking mafia and support real action, not just on cleaning up the banking system, but on stopping the extreme and totalitarian policies intended to prop it up, including the cash ban, bail-in and negative interest rates?

The unprecedented public blowback against the cash ban has demonstrated we can force shifts in these parties in the right direction—let's step up this fight to achieve policies that can clean up the financial system for good, so once again it can serve the people and real economy of Australia.

[Click here to sign the petition against the cash ban.](#)

[Click here for copies of the new "Fight the totalitarian ban on cash!" flyer to distribute.](#)