



Australian Citizens Party

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Unite Australia in support of the Commonwealth Postal Savings Bank!

The Senate's Australia Post inquiry report, tabled in Parliament yesterday (15 June), was the culmination of the amazing campaign to support Christine Holgate and the thousands of Licensed Post Offices (LPOs) she saved with her 2018 banking deal. That campaign brought home the need for a permanent solution to secure the long-term viability of LPOs and guarantee banking services for all Australians, which is a post office "people's bank". It's time to expand the campaign to unite Australian communities in support of the Commonwealth Postal Savings Bank Bill 2021, which the Citizens Party has drafted in cooperation with other parties to be introduced into Parliament in the near future.

Visit <https://youtu.be/-ybWxtLqJyY> to watch a new 4-minute video: Australia Post Inquiry Report presents a unique moment in history!

A public postal bank would have many benefits, including breaking the monopoly of the Big Four banks over Australia's financial system. For that reason, expect the major banks to try very hard to stop it. The banks' opposition can be overcome, however, by building a groundswell of grassroots support to force Parliament to pass the bill. The good news is that there is already broad support across all parties for a postal bank, which a grassroots campaign can unite and turn into action! Postal banks are very common—and popular!—around the world, and there is currently a parallel campaign for a postal bank in the United States, which is being supported by a grassroots movement called A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service (watch this short explanatory video by actor Danny Glover at <https://youtu.be/5o6vJw9mkzU>) involving more than 90 national organisations and a myriad of local community organisations. We have the same potential in Australia to unite all communities and organisations that use and value local post offices, and the licensees who run them, to support the postal bank solution.

Recruit your community— pass the CPSB resolution!

The Citizens Party has drafted the following resolution (overleaf), which we urge all Australians who support a post office people's bank to take to their local council, chamber of commerce, union branches, political party branches, indeed any community organisation, and ask them to endorse the Commonwealth Postal Savings Bank Bill.

What you can do

Supporters should ask as many local organisations as possible—after all, *everybody* needs the post office—to pass a motion to support this resolution at their council, branch, or board meeting; or, for groups that have less formal procedures, to endorse it in any other way that is appropriate, such as in the name of the leader of the organisation or group. The endorsement of the resolution should then be communicated to the local federal MP and to the Senators from that state so Parliament gets the message that Australians want a postal bank, and to the Citizens Party to keep track of and publicise the growing public support for the CPSB. Organisations like local councils and unions should also be urged to move the resolution up to their state and federal bodies for broader endorsement.

This grassroots campaign is absolutely a fight we can win, not least because a postal bank is already a popular idea in Australia. In Parliament it is supported by Katter's Australian Party (KAP), Pauline Hanson's One Nation (PHON), the Greens, and likely the National Party (at least most Nationals). Prominent members of both the Labor and Liberal parties also support the policy. The post office unions, including the Communications Workers Union (CWU) and its parent the Communications, Electrical, and Plumbers Union (CEPU), support a postal bank, as do the LPOs represented by the Licensed Post Office Group. The CEPU commissioned the Per Capita think tank to write an excellent report published in July 2020 entitled "PostBank: Filling a Void, Securing Essential Services". The goal of this campaign is to unite the existing support, and recruit more support, around the CPSB Bill, to make this a front-line political issue, including in the upcoming election campaign, and get the bill passed.

More information

The Citizens Party has produced a four-page flyer that explains the importance of a postal bank, and includes an excerpt from the Explanatory Memorandum of the Commonwealth Postal Savings Bank Bill 2021, which details how the CPSB will function.

Visit <https://citizensparty.org.au/sites/default/files/2021-06/7%20June%202021%20-%20Postal%20Bank%20Information%20Flyer.pdf> to read and download the flyer, so you can give it to local councillors and others whom you ask to pass the resolution.

RESOLUTION

for an Australian

Post Office People's Bank

[NAME of Council, Chamber of Commerce, Union, Club, Political Party branch, Church, or other body]

a. notes that:

- Bank branch and ATM closures are leaving many communities without access to financial services, especially in regional Australia;
- Since 1975 the number of bank branches in regional Australia has fallen by more than 60 per cent, and there are more than 1,500 communities across Australia with no bank branches at all;
- A large proportion of the population, including the elderly, disabled, small businesses, and local schools and charities, will always have a need for face-to-face financial services, despite advances in technology;
- For hundreds of communities, their only access to cash and financial services is through Bank@Post at their community post office;
- Bank@Post is an essential service to all communities, but is vulnerable to commercial decision-making by the banks, which can choose to withdraw their participation, and charge excessive fees on transactions;
- With four major banks controlling 80 per cent of the financial system, Australian consumers suffer from a lack of real banking competition;

b. calls on the Commonwealth Parliament to pass the Commonwealth Postal Savings Bank Bill to establish a post office people's bank, fully guaranteed by the Commonwealth, as a dedicated postal savings bank, operating exclusively through Australia Post's corporate and licensed post offices, which will ensure basic banking services—including deposit-taking, business and personal lending, and access to cash—are available to all Australians, create real competition for the major banks, and will contribute to Australia's national economic development.

c. write to the Local State and Federal Members of Parliament, to inform them of our desire to support the passage of the Commonwealth Postal Savings Bank Bill through Parliament.