

Australia Urgently Needs a *Glass-Steagall* Separation of Banks

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

This petition of the Citizens Electoral Council of Australia draws to the attention of the House the threat facing Australia's banking system from the deepening global financial crisis, which puts at serious risk the bank deposits of the Australian people, and essential banking services for the real economy.

Australia is now vulnerable because our banking system is concentrated in just four banks, which between them hold the overwhelming majority of deposits and provide the majority of banking services, but which have dangerously exposed themselves to shocks in the global financial system, including through nearly \$20 trillion in derivatives speculation.

We therefore ask the House to take immediate action to protect

deposits and essential commercial banking services, by enacting strict banking separation as did U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt's *Glass-Steagall Act 1933*. *Glass-Steagall* split deposit-taking, standard commercial banks from Wall Street's speculative investment banks, creating entirely separate entities under different roofs, thus successfully protecting the U.S. banking system until *Glass-Steagall's* repeal in 1999. We ask the House to apply the *Glass-Steagall* principle to Australia through legislation to divide each of the four major banks into two parts: 1) normal commercial banks as per *Glass-Steagall* standards, and 2) institutions involved in investment banking and other forms of speculation. Banks that speculate will then do so with their own money and at their own peril, with no government protection whatsoever.