***Demand* the Albanese government *save* our post offices!**

***All*** *Australians should sign the LPO Group’s petition to save post offices from bankruptcy by expanding services (including for a government bank)—see link below.*

After a week in Canberra meeting with politicians to discuss a public post office bank, the Australian Citizens Party (ACP) is alarmed that the threat of mass closures of post offices is being ignored.

ACP research Director Robert Barwick said today: “If the government doesn’t act, Australia could lose more than half the postal network before a postal bank is established.

“This would be devastating for thousands of communities that lose post offices, and it would severely limit the potential of a public post office bank.

“Currently, Australia Post has 4,271 post offices, which would make a government post office bank the biggest bank in Australia overnight, able to serve *all* communities, including the hundreds of communities completely abandoned by the major banks.

“That won’t be possible if Australia Post gets away with closing thousands of post offices.

“If we’re going to get a post office bank, it’s urgent that we demand the government save post offices.”

The ACP was joined in Canberra by the Licensed Post Office Group, which represents the interests of Australia’s 2,850 licensees who run post offices as independent small businesses, who are raising the alarm about the threat to the post office network.

Australia Post CEO Paul Graham has already declared his intention to close 271 post offices as soon as possible, to reduce the size of the network to the minimum of 4,000 it is required by law to maintain.

However, the LPO Group is warning that Australia Post’s management is only interested in expanding the parcels business, and sees everything else as an expense to reduce, including post offices.

The short-term ex-Woolworths, -McDonalds, and -Subway executives currently running Australia Post are ignoring the views of the licensees, informed by decades of institutional memory, as they look for ways to reduce the range of services available at post offices while they focus only on the parcels business.

But the services available at post offices are what keeps the licensees financially viable.

LPO Group warned the politicians that Australia Post doesn’t have to order licensed post offices to close; simply by withdrawing services and making LPOs financially unviable they will close themselves.

LPO Group is further warning that because the government rejected its request to stipulate the regulatory minimum must comprise 4,000 “manned” postal outlets, Australia Post will try to count automated postal lockers and kiosks as postal outlets to meet its regulatory requirements.

Australia Post is already preparing the community for this by running ads that show businesses using its parcels service automatically, without interacting with anybody at a post office.

The closures of thousands of bank branches across Australia, including hundreds of the last banks in towns, sparked outrage that led to the recent Senate inquiry which recommended an expert panel investigate establishing a public bank in post offices.

The closures of post offices that have already happened have sparked outrage and similar local protests—imagine losing thousands more!

LPO Group has launched a Parliamentary e-petition, which runs for nine more days, asking the government to allow licensees to expand their services at their post offices, including allowing them to open up to other parcels providers, not just Australia Post, to bring in extra revenue that will keep them financially viable and able to serve their communities.

LPO Group is also campaigning for the public postal bank, as the win-win solution to save *all* post offices.

Sign Petition EN6326 – Help grow our Local Community Post Office: <https://www.aph.gov.au/e-petitions/petition/EN6326>