**Break up the profit-gouging Coles-Woolies duopoly with a baseball bat – Dr Andy Schmulow**

While millions of Australian families and small businesses straining under the cost of living are paying sky-high prices at Woolworths and Coles, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission’s reports today:

“Aldi, Coles and Woolworths appear to be among the most profitable supermarket businesses globally.”

The ACCC report found: “Coles’ and Woolworths’ market shares are increasing and they face no rivals of comparable scope and scale. In an oligopolistic market structure such as this, they have little incentive to beat each other on price.”

Woolworths has 38 per cent of the grocery market and Coles has 29 per cent–67 per cent between them–while Aldi has 9 per cent.

Regulation expert and Australian Citizens Party Senate candidate for NSW, Assoc. Prof. of Law Dr Andy Schmulow, said today, “I told you so. I’ve been saying this since May of last year.”

He reiterated his call in 2024 that the only solution is to give the ACCC divestiture powers, so they can break up the super-concentrated supermarket sector.

In his 2024 testimony to the Senate Select Committee on Supermarket Prices, Dr Schmulow said:

“Our economy is typified by monopolies, duopolies and oligopolies. We see this with airlines, telcos, banks and energy providers, and certainly we see it in the groceries market, which is a duopoly characterised by excessive market concentration.

“Of course, this is denied by Coles and Woolworths, as is to be expected. Being one half of a duopoly is a warm and comfortable place to be.

“So what is the solution to excessive market concentration? The answer lies in refreshing, rejuvenating, renewing and revitalising our free market by introducing choice and competition. That requires the power to break up monopolies, duopolies and oligopolies. … This is not radical. It's standard practice in many other leading G20 jurisdictions and has been for decades. Examples include divestiture steps against AT&T, Microsoft, Ma Bell and others. In all cases that I'm aware of, the results were strongly positive for employment, economic growth, competition, price elasticity, consumer choice and service.”

Dr Schmulow said the divestiture powers should not be left to the Courts: “Rather, the divestiture powers should be vested in the ACCC and should be drafted by experts in plain English drafting, supported by linguists and economists, and the role of the court should be left to that of review.”

“This is why I’m standing for the Senate”, Dr Schmulow said today. “Send me to Canberra. I’ll break up this duopoly with a baseball bat.”