Hunter United welcomes Federal Government support for credit unions and building societies

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Newcastle based credit union Hunter United has welcomed reports today that Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan will offer credit unions and building societies more assistance to allow them to grow and compete fairly with the big four banks. "While the Governments final banking package has yet to be released Treasurer Swan has publicly expressed his support for alternatives to the big banks" said Hunter Uniteds Managing Director, John Ford. "Its great to see this acknowledgment of the role credit unions and building societies can play in offering lower interest rates and better choice to consumers who are dissatisfied with the big banks."

"Credit unions and building societies are strong, secure and regulated in the same way as banks. And we are ready to put competition back into retail banking and give Hunter residents a better deal," Mr Ford said.

A recent national poll by Essential Research showed a growing level of dissatisfaction with the major banks, but that consumers believe there are too many obstacles to making a switch.

40 per cent said they had considered changing their main bank at some point in the last five years, but two-thirds of this group ended up sticking with their current bank.

The poll also found strong support for Federal Government action to promote competition, make it easier to shift accounts and abolish exit fees, with 75 per cent of respondents agreeing that the Federal Government needed to do more to encourage competition.

John Ford commented "credit unions and building societies offer genuine choice to consumers, offer consistently better home loan rates. Hunter United's home loans start from 6.89%p.a." "We welcome the Federal Governments support. Any initiatives that help credit unions and building societies to compete on a level-playing field will help to keep the big banks honest and give customers a real choice," Mr Ford said.

"Major bank customers can vote with their feet and move their banking to a credit union or building society. If people want to know more, we encourage them to go to www.hunterunited.com.au."

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