

# Financial Reform: How We Can Save Our Economy

By [Tiffany Cheng](#), [David DeGraw](#), and [Kevin Zeese](#)

Global Research, May 13, 2010

[Prosperity Agenda](#) 11 May 2010

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#)

The next few weeks will culminate into a defining moment in American history and lay the course for our economic future. After two years of being asleep at the switch, Congress is finally stepping up and taking action on financial reform. The resulting bill will be a clear indication and definitive proof as to who is actually running our country. Will it reinforce the dominance of the Wall Street elite, or will it mark a rebirth of the rule of law and economic prosperity for millions of Americans who have seen their standard of living decline?

The early indications are ominous, two of the most crucial aspects of true reform have already been dealt a severe blow. The amendment to break up the “too big to fail” banks has been voted down, and the amendment to audit the Federal Reserve has been gutted of important provisions.

We cannot just sit back and let politicians, who are overly influenced by campaign funding and lobbying activities on the part of the big banks who have plunged us into this crisis, decide our future without us. Our passive unwillingness to stand up for our own rights is part of the reason we are in this crisis to begin with. Right now is the most pivotal time for us to make our voice heard.

This bill is where we draw the line and STAND UP.

Enough is enough! It's time for Americans to take OUR economy back from the big banks and financial interests that have looted it. It's time to restructure, decentralize and democratize OUR economy.

Wall Street has pillaged our country. It has been bailed out and saved from their casino gambling, Ponzi schemes and allowed to continue their plunder. They are the concentrated power that history has warned us about.

Trillions of our taxpayer dollars have been handed over from the Treasury Department and Federal Reserve to the Wall Street elite, handed over to benefit the very people who caused the crisis. The truth about how many trillions of our tax dollars have been “transferred,” and who exactly they have been given to, has been kept secret in the un-audited Federal Reserve. It is time to audit the Fed and either dismantle it or remake it so it reflects the interests of the people, not the big banks who have hijacked our economy.

How much do they have to steal before Americans say, ‘No more! It is OUR money, it is OUR economy’? How many more honest, law abiding, hardworking Americans have to lose their homes, jobs and struggle just to acquire basic necessities and make ends meet before these greedy bankers are held accountable?

Before laying out our 12-step program to take our economy back, let's take a brief look at

some of the devastating results of Wall Street's greed:

- \* Over 50 million US citizens are living in poverty;
- \* The US now has the HIGHEST poverty rate in the industrialized world;
- \* 50% of American children will need to use a food stamp during their childhood;
- \* 30 million Americans are in need of employment, with 20% of Americans either unemployed, underemployed or without hope of finding work;
- \* Foreclosure rates continue to break record after record. More than five million families have already lost their homes. A record 2.8 million properties were in foreclosure in 2009. The first three months of 2010 had the highest foreclosure rates ever, and 13-25 million foreclosures are predicted by 2014.
- \* In the past two years, Americans have lost \$5 trillion from their pensions and savings. They have also lost \$13 trillion in the value of their homes.
- \* Personal bankruptcies are rising. A record number of Americans filed for bankruptcy in March 2010. In fact, 6,900 Americans go bankrupt every day.
- \* Due to this economic crisis, American workers have bought more on credit cards than ever before. We now have over \$850 billion in credit card debt, as banks charge usurious interest rates on this debt.
- \* The US now has the HIGHEST inequality of wealth in our nation's history. The economic top 1% controls an all-time record 70% of all financial assets.
- \* The average CEO salary, including stock options and incentives, has skyrocketed and is now 500 times more than the average workers.
- \* While CEO salaries have been soaring and corporate profits are breaking all-time records, average worker pay is declining and incentives are being cut.

These are just some of the horrifying results of Wall Street's rigging of the economy. The free-market is now a rigged-market ruled by corporate welfare and crony capitalists who are funneling wealth away from 99% of the American public and directly into their coffers on an unprecedented scale. Risk, losses and debts have been socialized, while profits have been privatized.

As a consequence of their continued looting, austerity measures are about to be implemented. In state after state across the country, and on a federal level, we are facing severe deficits. Mass school closings have already been scheduled for the end of this school year, as thousands of teachers have already been told that they will no longer have a job. Pension funds and medical programs are being slashed. Fire fighters, police and health care workers are being cut back . Six million Americans are on the verge of losing the unemployment benefits that they have been surviving off of and there are now a record six available workers for every one job opening. Unemployment insurance funds have already been depleted in 33 states, with more expected to go into the red within the next few months.

Draconian cuts in vital social programs and critical government functions are just beginning to be phased in, while our national wealth is still being transferred to the wealthiest. They are pulling out the social infrastructure from below us and are about to pile higher taxes on top of us.

While nearly 200 million, two out of three, Americans are struggling to make ends meet and currently living paycheck to paycheck, billionaires have increased their aggregate wealth by a stunning 50% during this economic crisis.

The Robber Barons of the Gilded Age have now been displaced as America's greediest ruling class.

After trillions in bailouts – a cover for the greatest theft of wealth in history – we are seeing record-breaking profits and bonuses on Wall Street. We have the power to stop this looting, break up this concentrated power and take back the economy. We just have to stand up for ourselves – TOGETHER.

We can break the financial oppression, and here's how we will do it.

The Mobilization for OUR Economy begins while the Obama Administration and Congress are debating reform of the financial industry. However, much more than what is being proposed is needed to give Americans control over their economic lives. To achieve these objectives, we are working to make the following common-sense reforms into reality:

#1) Break up the "Too Big To Fail" Banks. You can't have free-market competition when a handful of big banks can rig the market and regulatory structure to benefit themselves at the expense of everyone else. We will continue to push for reforms put forth in the Kaufman-Brown SAFE Banking Act.

#2) Put in place a transparent open exchange for over-the-counter derivatives and ban High Frequency Trading (HFT). Investigate all prior HFT and frontrunning activities, including the sudden 1000 point stock market plunge on May 6th. Create a team of experts to analyze/restructure/dissolve existing derivative contracts to reduce risk. We support Senator Blanche Lincoln's Wall Street Transparency and Accountability Act.

#3) Require stricter accounting standards so the real value and debt/liabilities of banks are understood. With this, a more responsible executive pay structure must be implemented. Investigate firms and hold them liable for accounting scams. Clawbacks must be implemented on bonuses and executive compensation that was based on false profits. Investigate the Federal Reserve's role in covering up, aiding and abetting firms in accounting fraud.

#4) Rein in corporate power. Stop corporate welfare – no more bailouts! End corporate personhood and reverse the Citizens United court decision by a constitutional amendment. We must also make sure that all taxpayer funds and loans handed out in the bailout are returned with an interest rate that reflects current profit margins that were created as a result of our tax money.

#5) Audit the Federal Reserve. There should be zero secrecy in this private banking corporation that prints U.S. dollars and extends zero interest loans to a select few. The Fed should either be dismantled or re-made to represent the interests of the American people, not the banks, and include elected positions on their Board of Governors.

#6) Tax trading of stocks, bonds, derivatives and options. A small micro-tax applied to large firms would slow high-risk speculation and provide significant revenue, allowing reduction of income taxes, withholding taxes and adequately fund government operations.

#7) Corresponding to our second objective, close the casino by reinstating both a modernized version of the Glass-Steagall Act, which separated commercial and investment banking, and a strict Net Capital rule that limits wild risk-taking and speculating.

#8) Shut the revolving door and put up a strict firewall between finance executives and government regulators and officials.

#9) End usurious credit card and pay day loans. Cap interest rates and get rid of hidden bank fees.

#10) Create an empowered and independent Consumer Protection Agency (CPA). Investigate predatory lending schemes, liar's loans and put a moratorium on home foreclosures, as the first steps in what will be many investigations into abusive practices. Credit rating agencies should be regulated by the CPA and function independently of the firms producing the products being rated.

#11) Urgently hire 1,500+ white-collar crime investigators to enforce existing laws.

#12) Fire, investigate and prosecute government officials like Tim Geithner, Ben Bernanke, Larry Summers and John Dugan, and investigate Hank Paulson, Alan Greenspan and Robert Rubin, all of whom played a significant role in the financial collapse and the massive "transfer" of wealth to the finance industry. Also investigate and prosecute, under RICO statutes, top executives in financial firms who engaged in fraudulent activity. Appoint people like Elizabeth Warren, Simon Johnson, Joseph Stiglitz, William Black and Ron Paul to positions of authority over the economy.

These are our primary objectives and the necessary steps that must be taken to take OUR economy back. If the financial reform bill, that has been two years in the making, doesn't live up to this 12-step program, we will know that our politicians have sold us short once again.

The Wall Street elite have controlled our political process for too long!

We must show them that we mean business this time, so STAND UP and fight for your future. Join us at sit-ins, protests and rallies across the United States. We can take back our country. We can regain control over our economic lives.

The time is now!

HISTORY IS CALLING YOU!

YOUR FUTURE IS CALLING YOU!

YOU ARE NEEDED!

Sign up at [www.forOUReconomy.org](http://www.forOUReconomy.org)

*Tiffany Cheng directs A New Way Forward ([anwf.org](http://anwf.org)), David DeGraw directs*

*AmpedStatus.com and Kevin Zeese directs ProsperityAgenda.US*

## **New Release from Global Research**

### **LAUNCH DATE: MAY 25TH 2010**

The Global Economic Crisis  
The Great Depression of the XXI Century

Michel Chossudovsky and Andrew Gavin Marshall (Editors)

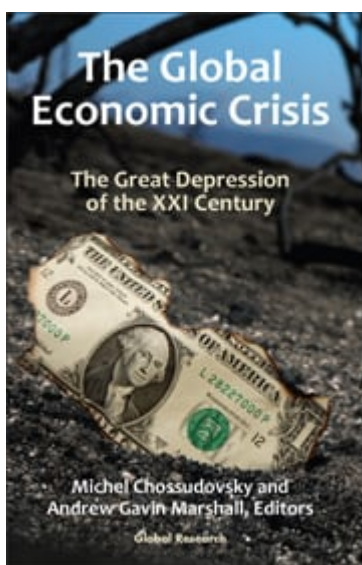
Montreal, Global Research Publishers. Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), 2010.

ISBN 978-0-9737147-3-9 (416 pages)

[For further information as well as ordering information, click here](#)

**Special Pre-Publication Offer:** \$15.00 plus S&H (includes taxes where applicable) (List Price US\$25.95 plus taxes)

The book will be shipped following the launch date of May 25, 2010. This also applies to other purchases combined with the pre-publication offer  
(if you wish to purchase 3 or more copies, scroll down for discounted price)



[For further information as well as ordering information, click here](#)

The original source of this article is [Prosperity Agenda](#)

Copyright © [Tiffany Cheng](#), [David DeGraw](#), and [Kevin Zeese](#), [Prosperity Agenda](#), 2010

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Tiffany Cheng](#),

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)