

## [Read and Review of "Wall Street and the Financial Crisis: Anatomy of a Financial Collapse" - Report by US Senate Investigation Subcommittee](#)

April 21, 2011 by [Rosa Schechter](#)

First things first: the new Senate report on Wall Street is long and detailed. So long, in fact, that it will take you more than a ream of paper just to print the whole thing. Luckily, it's also available online in its entirety, should you choose to read the whole thing. (And you won't be wasting time if you choose to do so.)

[Download a complete copy of the 650-page Majority and Minority Staff Report of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations | Committee of Homeland Security and Government Affairs of the United States Senate entitled "WALL STREET AND THE FINANCIAL CRISIS: Anatomy of a Financial Collapse," HERE.](#)

### ***What is the Wall Street and the Financial Crisis Report All About?***

It is the culmination of the Senate's own investigation into some of the reasons our economy is in the turmoil it is: this is the Homeland Security synopsis of why we're here and how we got here.

Two years in the making, the bipartisan subcommittee has issued its findings and conclusions in a report that names names and gives details - times, dates, documents. Again, it's [best to read it on-screen](#). There is an amazing amount of information in this report.

### ***One Tidbit: Analysis of The Washington Mutual Fiasco***

Fingers are pointed at the role various governmental agencies have played in the financial collapse throughout the report. Of particular note, the [Office of Thrift Supervision](#) which had the job of overseeing lenders like Washington Mutual.

Remember [Washington Mutual](#)? That's right: **WaMu** was that big bank that offered free checking across the country - and doesn't exist anymore.

Over eight days in September 2008, there was a bank run on WaMu by fearful depositors who took out \$16.7 BILLION in that short time window - this was the apparent final straw for WaMu, and the Office of Thrift Supervision shut its doors shortly thereafter, selling the WaMu assets to JP Morgan (WaMu sued, of course). [Read the OTS Fact Sheet on WaMu here.](#)

At one time, WaMu branch offices were almost as commonplace as the golden arches or Kentucky chicken joints. WaMu was a major financial player in this country - and yet, how many remember that bank run? Even more importantly, what happened in Washington that allowed WaMu to get to the point that in one week's time, disgruntled bank depositors withdrew almost \$17,000,000,000.00?

The Senate Report bring the Office of Thrift Supervision to task for this and other failures to protect the banking industry. Emails are revealed, documents are incorporated, that explain the OTS's failure to protect WaMu from its own demise.

Things like OTS's director John Reich complaining about FDIC chairwoman Shiela Barr in an email to his deputy Scott Polakoff: "*...I cannot believe the audacity of this woman.*" [Report page 186, footnote 644.]

Juicy stuff for a government report, right?

Back to the WaMu story. The report is in hindsight and some of it is a little like shutting the barn door after the horse is gone -- the OTS no longer exists. Last year, it was dissolved in Dodd-Frank and its operations are being taken over by the Comptroller of the Currency.

### ***Report Is Worth Your Time - and It's Better Late than Never***

One of the great things about America is its ability to be honest with itself and admit to being wrong, and changing course as need be. The Senate Report is filled with detailed analysis of what happened over the past decade or so within the financial industry - all for the purpose of learning from the mistakes that have been made as well as the flagrant frauds that did indeed transpire.

It's true, the Senate is using hindsight here. We're all using hindsight now, attempting to discover clues to get ourselves out of this economic mess. The Senate Report was worth the time and effort expended, and it's a must read for all involved in the American financial community - including depositors - as we work together toward a better, and more prosperous, future.