

# Activists petition federal government over persecuting whistleblowers

<https://www.echo.net.au/2020/11/activists-petition-fed-govt-over-persecuting-whistleblowers/>

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A petition with 4,291 signatures was posted to federal Attorney-General Christian Porter, calling on him to drop charges against barrister Bernard Collaery and his client, Witness K. Photo supplied.

Gareth Smith from the Palestine Liberation Centre says he has posted a petition with 4,291 signatures to federal Attorney-General Christian Porter, calling on him to drop charges against barrister Bernard Collaery and his client, Witness K, who exposed the federal government's bugging of the Timor Leste government.

The petition states, 'These are honourable men who bravely exposed Australia's subterfuge in its negotiations with the government of Timor Leste'.



Byron Bay saw a protest and posting of a petition to federal Attorney-General Christian Porter calling on him to drop charges against barrister Bernard Collaery and his client, Witness K. Photo supplied.

### **Oil and gas grab**

Mr Smith said, 'I was in Timor Leste in 1999 as a District Electoral Officer, and experienced the acute poverty and bravery of the people who sacrificed so much to help Australia during WWII'.

'There is a cairn erected by Australia outside Dili as a gesture of thanks to the Timorese, but its message now rings hollow and hypocritical in light of Australia's unscrupulous bugging of the Timorese Parliament so that it could gain an unfair advantage over the Timor Sea oil and gas negotiations.

'Just how low can you get when you diddle the Timorese, the poorest people in the world? And the men who exposed this contemptible swindle are now being viciously calumniated by a rotten government and face imprisonment. Shame, Australia, shame!'.