

Australian Parliament Member Accuses Hillsong of Money Laundering, Tax Evasion

The scandals surrounding Hillsong Church in Australia continue to balloon, and to make a black mark on the body of Christ. Last year, founder Brian Houston resigned his position as lead pastor over legal problems over how the church handled a problem with pedophilia concerning his father in the late 1990s.

Then, Carl Lentz, the flamboyant pastor of Hillsong NYC was caught having an affair, forcing him to resign.

And now, Australian Parliament Member Andrew Wilke has invoked parliamentary privilege to level accusations of “money laundering and tax evasion,” which has produced what he claims are leaked documents from the megachurch that he says reveal it earned \$80 million more than it publicly declared, The Guardian reported.

Wilkie says the leaked financial records and documents were provided to the Australian Taxation Office and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. The Guardian reported Wilkie was critical that those revelations had not been acted on.

“This is a failure of regulatory oversight every bit as alarming as Hillsong’s criminality,” Wilkie said in parliament on Thursday.

“Hillsong has disputed the allegations against officials of the church and claimed many of Wilkie’s representations were false or out of context and that the church was engaging with regulators as part of an ongoing legal case,” The Guardian reported.

“Hillsong Church has been open and transparent with our congregation about past governance failures, and over the past twelve months we have engaged independent, professional assistance to overhaul our governance and accountability procedures,” the church said in a statement.

Speaking in the Federation Chamber, Wilkie claimed a whistleblower provided him with financial records and board papers related to Hillsong last year. Wilkie alleged the papers showed evidence of fraud, money laundering and tax evasion at the church.

“Laying two large stacks of folders willed with papers, and in those papers were claims that four members of the Houston family spent \$150,000 of church money on a luxury retreat in Cancun, Mexico,” according to The Guardian. Other allegations against Hillsong claimed lavish spending on luxury watches, luggage sets, designer clothes, skateboards and cash gifts to board members for birthdays and anniversaries.

 Wilkie also claimed that Brian Houston used “private jets like Ubers,” and alleged that the church founder undertook trips costing \$55,000, \$52,000, \$30,000, \$22,000 and \$20,000 in one three-month period.

The documents also alleged that “Phil Dooley, who took over leadership of the church after Houston, had spent tens of thousands on business class flights for himself and his daughter.”

“Hillsong followers believe the money they put in the poor box goes to the poor, but these documents show how that money is actually used to do the kind of shopping that would embarrass a Kardashian,” Wilkie said.

Stay tuned to Charisma News for more developments on this shocking story.

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