

*I object to the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023.*

*The proposed bill undermines freedom of speech by attempting to 'balance' that fundamental right with the notion of combating so-called 'misinformation'. Fundamental rights cannot be balanced against anything, rather they are undermined.*

*Determining what qualifies as so-called 'misinformation' is subjective and entrusting a government agency to decide truthfulness raises concerns.*

*So-called 'misinformation', unless it incites violence, does not cause direct harm, and defining harm based on subjective criteria is problematic.*

*The bill grants excessive control to authorities and will lead to censorship, which undermines our democracy. You can't have a democracy without free speech.*

*Alternative approaches should be explored that do not infringe upon freedom of speech.*