

Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023.

In regard to the proposed Bill above, it is essential for all the public to be able to discuss and comment on all subjects. For example, a debating contest is between opposing sides so that an observer can come to a conclusion on the topic as a result of hearing both sides of the arguments.

There is sufficient evidence in the last few years where governments and others have expressed a view that was incorrect. Only by hearing dissenting views (and evidence) were the public and indeed others in government positions able to ascertain the actual truth.

To have legislation such as this Bill only mimics what the governments of China and North Korea are doing. History has also recorded countries such as Russia and Nazi Germany did this same thing, as a result the people were vilified and oppressed.

There is no argument that truth and misinformation is out in the public arena but only through viewing both sides can an objective understanding be obtained. Generally, the public is able to discern truth from misinformation – but only having the liberty to view both sides of the argument. Removing either one is going down the path of Totalitarianism, similar to countries mentioned above.

Australia is a democracy from which the word comes from the Greek words "demos", meaning people, and "kratos" meaning power; so democracy can be thought of as "power of the people": a way of governing which depends on the will of the people.

Australia does not define its national identity by race or religion, but by shared values, including political, economic and religious freedom, liberal democracy, the rule of law, racial and gender equality and mutual respect.

The proposed law will undermine this principle and move Australia to a Totalitarianism society. This is defined as **a form of government that attempts to assert total control over the lives of its citizens**. It is characterised by strong central rule that attempts to control and direct all aspects of individual life through coercion and repression.

This Bill cannot be viewed as a balance on any level and therefore needs to be withdrawn.