

9th July, 2023

To the Albanese Government,

Thank you for the opportunity to give feedback regarding the *Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023*.

This Bill would give the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) the authority to 'develop a code of practice covering measures to combat **misinformation** and **disinformation** on digital platforms, which the ACMA could register and enforce'. I would like to know who gets to define what is 'mis' or 'dis' information? In addition to this, the fact sheet refers to 'misinformation or disinformation that meets a threshold of being likely to **cause or contribute to serious harm**'. Again, this wording is very subjective. Who will determine what is likely to cause 'serious harm'?

I am extremely concerned by the wording of this Bill. It is very subjective, and leaves the door 'wide open' for freedom of speech to be removed. As a proud Australian, I highly value our democracy, of which 'freedom of speech' is a vital part. A healthy, functioning democracy requires freedom of speech, which means that ideas from across the ideological and political spectrum are discussed and debated. This Bill will remove the rights of Australians to be able to freely express their opinions and points of view, in case those opinions and views are deemed as 'misinformation' or 'disinformation' that is likely to 'cause or contribute serious harm'.

I firmly disagree with the *Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023*. I am seeking greater transparency and clarity so that the liberty of Australians is preserved. The government must clearly indicate who will determine what is classed as 'misinformation' or 'disinformation'. The government must also clearly explain how they will determine 'serious harm'. I do not want to witness the loss of freedom of speech in this nation.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Pitt

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Postal Address: [REDACTED]

(I confirm that my submission can be made public.)