

Dear Sir/Madam,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing as a concerned citizen of Australia to express my strong opposition to the recent proposal to grant the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) new powers to combat misinformation and disinformation. While I understand the need to address these issues in our digital age, I believe that such measures risk undermining fundamental principles of freedom of speech and open discourse.

Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of any democratic society, and it is crucial that we safeguard this right even in the face of misinformation and disinformation challenges. While misinformation can undoubtedly be harmful, we must not allow knee-jerk reactions to threaten the principles that make our nation democratic and open. Instead, I urge the ACMA to adopt a measured and evidence-based approach in dealing with this issue, respecting the rights of individuals to access and exchange information freely.

Granting ACMA sweeping powers to police information on the internet could lead to unintended consequences, such as the suppression of legitimate dissent, censorship of alternative viewpoints, and the creation of a chilling effect on public discourse. It may also place an undue burden on content providers, journalists, and social media platforms, stifling innovation and potentially leading to self-censorship to avoid running afoul of vague regulations.

Furthermore, determining what qualifies as misinformation and disinformation can be subjective and prone to bias. This raises concerns about the potential for abuse of power and the selective

targeting of certain individuals or groups based on political or ideological grounds.

Rather than imposing new powers, I encourage ACMA to focus on promoting media literacy and digital literacy education among the general population. Equipping citizens with the necessary critical thinking skills to evaluate information they encounter online is a more constructive approach to combating misinformation.

Additionally, fostering transparency and accountability within the media industry can help build trust and reduce the spread of false information.

In conclusion, I respectfully urge ACMA to reconsider its proposal to acquire new powers to combat misinformation and disinformation. Instead, I urge you to seek alternative strategies that preserve our fundamental democratic values while addressing the challenges posed by misinformation in a balanced and respectful manner.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns. I trust that you will carefully weigh the potential implications of this decision on the fabric of our society and democratic principles.

Sincerely,