

I totally oppose the introduction of the misinformation bill 2023, Australia is a party to seven core international human rights treaties. The right to freedom of opinion and expression is contained in articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).to which Australia is a signatory.

A just government allows the people to be free in their actions and deeds; censorship is an unfair form of control that is not necessary. People are meant to be free to do what they want; the government is meant to organize society to the point where people can do that. The essence of a free country and a just country involves a government that protects and serves the people without diminishing their own individual rights – this includes the right to knowledge and expressing one’s opinion. However, that can often come in conflict with the vested interests and desires of the individuals who make up the government, and they wish to see that potentially negative or incendiary information or opinion is suppressed. When the government censors the media, they are stifling freedom of speech, and that can lead eventually to somewhat of a totalitarian state, where only what the government allows you to see and think is allowed to be aired and written. Creativity and objectivity alike are threatened by this possibility.

Despite the danger, the people have a right to know what the government is doing to protect them – if censorship occurs in part, it has the potential to be used to hide actions and initiatives that work against the people in favor of those in power. If the government begins to hide information from its citizens in order to ostensibly protect them, it sets a dangerous precedent that could give the government implicit license to censor whatever they want, as long as they believe it is in the service of the people. The people must be the ones to decide what is good and bad for them; the only way to make that decision is to see the information. Therefore, the media must be allowed to present whatever it wants, even if it potentially embarrasses or reveals the government’s plots. Transparency is far too vital an aspect of government to ignore simply because it is inconvenient