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Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

Introduction Freedom of information and free speech are fundamental pillars of any democratic society.

They allow individuals to express their opinions, engage in critical thinking, and hold those in power accountable. However, this is a concerning government bill that seeks to restrict these essential rights. This document aims to present arguments against the proposed legislation, highlighting the dangers of limiting freedom of information and free speech.

1. Government's Propagation of Misinformation

Over the past few years, the government and its bureaucrats have been the primary propagators of mis and disinformation. Their dangerous lies have caused significant harm to the Australian people, the economy, and society at large. It is therefore perplexing that this legislation fails to address the government's role as the biggest source of misinformation.

2. Suppressing Dissent and Removing Free Speech

The legislation appears to be designed to eliminate any sources of dissent against the government in power, thereby restricting free speech and the right to debate. It aims to remove independent media sources and social media platforms that provide alternative perspectives, including references to scientific facts and peer-reviewed evidence. Such restrictions undermine the democratic process and hinder the discovery of truth.

3. Orwellian Censorship and Removal of Truth

The bill employs the terms "misinformation" and "disinformation" to mask its true intent, which is to control narratives and suppress dissenting voices. If the legislation were honest, it would acknowledge that the truth and scientific facts pose no threat to the safety and well-being of Australians. Instead, it aims to establish Orwellian censorship, eradicate thought crimes, and deny citizens access to the truth.

4. Inaccurate Labelling of Information

The legislation's definition of misinformation as content that is false, misleading, or deceptive is flawed. Numerous instances have occurred where information initially labelled as misinformation was later proven to be true. Examples include statements about the mandated nature of certain medical treatments, their limitations in preventing transmission, their distribution throughout the body, the origin of SARS-

CoV-2, and the efficacy of repurposed drugs. Such mislabelling of information undermines public trust and impedes the discovery of truth.

5. Removal of Global Information Sources

The legislation seeks to censor not only what is published within Australia but also internet content accessible to Australians worldwide. By restricting access to global information and news sources, the legislation poses a significant harm to the Australian population, economy, environment, and democratic processes. Throughout history, those who have sought to limit information and destroy history have never been on the side of what is right.

6. Passing Responsibility to Digital Platforms

The bill's attempt to pass the responsibility for addressing misinformation and disinformation onto digital platforms is merely an evasion of accountability. Without clear guidance from the government on approved narratives and information, platforms will struggle to determine what is permissible. This approach risks restricting freedom of speech and undermines the government's responsibility to protect democratic values.

7. Eliminating Public Discussion and Debate

The legislation exempts authorized electoral and referendum content, professional news, and satire from regulation. This exemption, coupled with the absence of independent voices, suggests a deliberate attempt to eliminate public discussion, questioning, and debate that is not funded by the government in power. Such a restriction erodes freedom of speech and enables the consolidation of power without accountability.

Conclusion

The proposed government legislation is an affront to the principles of freedom of information and free speech. By targeting independent sources of information and dissenting voices, the legislation threatens the democratic fabric of Australia. Its lack of interest in truth and the elimination of diverse perspectives are not aligned with the values of a fair and free society. It is crucial to defeat this legislation to safeguard the rights and liberties that are the cornerstone of a truly democratic nation.

Yours sincerely

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