# Submission related to proposed legislation for new ACMA powers to combat misinformation and disinformation.

I believe this is an incredibly dangerous path to go down with this legislation. We are living in a very different world since the advent of social media allowed spreading of different types of information so easily and people with similar beliefs and such grouping together online.

The algorithms that feed more of "what you like" to you increase the ability to live in an echo chamber of similar ideas, never hearing opposing viewpoints, and this can have consequences. We all need to be able to discuss issues with people we disagree with, hear opposing viewpoints, discuss them and thus people on both sides of the argument can learn from each other and be better.

Unfortunately, the world we currently live in seems to be more and more fractured by such things into disparate groups who view those outside of their group as evil and believe they have no virtues and nothing worth listening to, instead of finding common ground and being willing to listen to each other on points of difference and truly understand each other's point of view.

Coming into this world we then have voices saying we need legislation like this. Shut down "misinformation", shut down "hate speech" and things like that. However, this sort of world that calls for such things is actually the worst possible world in which to have them. Because of the lack of willingness to discuss issues and understand differences, each side just starts using terms like "misinformation" and "hate speech" for whatever the other side says.

As such, laws to allow shutting down of such things are incredibly dangerous.

Who is to decide what is misinformation. Governments have been known to push things that are wrong. Scientists have been known to make definitive statements that later prove to be incorrect. We should never be allowed to simply shut down alternative voices and call them misinformation.

The best way to combat misinformation has always been with a better argument showing why that is incorrect. If someone will refuse to enter a genuine discussion and defend their position and instead just try to shut down the other argument then it's generally a big red-flag that what they are saying is misinformation may actually be correct information that they just don't like and thus are trying to suppress.

We need to find a way to improve social media, to improve how we communicate, to find our common ground, to work together to understand others, have empathy for opposing viewpoints, be willing to consider that we may not be right on everything and can learn from others, and be willing to agree to disagree if neither person is convinced by the others argument. Be okay with being offended and getting over it, not calling for the head of anyone who says something that offends us.

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