

## Objection to proposed anti free speech law.

I am completely opposed to the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation ) Bill 2023.

Who defines what is misinformation or disinformation?

The bill gives government power to regulate "truth" and force social media platforms to censor "misinformation" or "disinformation" that is "harmful"; Vague terms that are open to very broad interpretation.

Would harm to health include such misinformation, now acknowledged as fact as lockdowns doing more harm than good or the so called "vaccine" being linked to myocarditis and other health problems?

Will qualified doctors, scientists etc be de-platformed, censored and have their reputations ruined because they express a different view from that espoused by the government?

Will content that expresses scepticism about the Net Zero agenda and so called climate change be considered misinformation or disinformation?

Will saying that men shouldn't play women's sports, or defending traditional marriage be considered hate?

Will debates about foreign or domestic policy be censored by social media?

The subjects of all those questions are open to debate.

A healthy, functioning democracy requires freedom of speech, which means that ideas from across the ideological and political spectrum are discussed and debated with the hope that good arguments, will determine the truth.

Social media is rife with misinformation and disinformation, but the only way to combat it is to publicly refute it and not by censorship.

The best remedy for misinformation or disinformation is always free and open debate. Blatant lies will soon be exposed. We don't need or want government officials arbitrating truth.

Thinkers have struggled with the implications of free speech for centuries and have concluded that limiting free speech is far more dangerous to society than the regrettable consequences of false claims.

A lot of people say things that I disagree with, and that is their right, and it is helpful to be challenged in a respectful manner to determine the truth.

We must seek greater transparency and clarity so that our liberty and freedom of speech are preserved. Interference with free speech is unacceptable.

Jesus is the ultimate source of truth. May we be anchored in Him and united together as we stand for his truth in the public square.

Free speech is enshrined in the First amendment of the Bill of Rights in the US constitution and also enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which Australia helped to draft in 1948. The Australian government must protect this right.

Governments and their advisers do not necessarily know the truth about every situation. Here are a few examples but there are many more in history.

Hundreds of years ago the government of the day in Europe believed and strongly promoted the idea that the earth was flat. Non believers were severely punished. In time, with the aid of science and astrology, the government was proven wrong. We know today that the earth is, in fact, largely spherical.

More recently, the Australian government of the day strongly promoted and defended the Robo debt scheme and all it's so called benefits. However, according to a recent in depth report, the scheme was found to be a total disaster and adversely affected the lives and health of thousands of Australians. Again, the government was proven wrong.

At the time of the Covid 19 so called pandemic, we (The Australian population) were told by government and health officials that the so called vaccine was "safe" and "effective". Since the time of that emergency it has been determined that the so called vaccines were not safe. So much so that the vaccines have been linked to multiple deaths and severe long term health problems and were responsible for worldwide excess deaths.

Also, the vaccines were not effective because they offered no protection against transmission of the virus. In addition, it has been determined that the more jabs a person had the more chance that person has of contracting the virus. Again, the government was proven wrong.

This bill is a clear curtailing of our democratic right to participate freely in open debate and is a shocking assault on free speech and our individual freedom of conscience and thought.

Our way of life allows everybody to form their own opinions, with their own brains, from a plethora of information, without being coerced or manipulated by people in power pushing their own agenda.

Regulating truth and free speech on social media will not protect democracy but suppress it.

This freedom stilling legislation must be stopped.

