

30 July 2023

**To: The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development,
Communications and the Arts,**

RE: New ACMA powers to combat misinformation and disinformation (the Communications Legislation Amendment (combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023).

Dear Officer,

SUBMISSION

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional development, Arts and Communication have invited feedback on a proposed draft of the Communications Legislations Amendment Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation Bill 2023 (the Bill).

I have prepared this submission as an individual Australian who has significant concerns over this Bill.

I am Australian born community minded person; I hold a bachelor's degree in teaching along with qualifications as an Enrolled nurse. In both of my professional fields critical thinking, advocating and problem solving are vital for safe and positive outcomes. Every day I engage in questioning, analyzing,

collaborating, interpreting, making judgements and using discernment. I am deeply concerned that the Communications Legislation Amendment Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation Bill will significantly impact my ability to perform my professional duties and impact on my human rights in a democratic nation. I strongly object to this bill being passed.

we have an implied right of political speech and this bill stops that. Freedom of speech, thoughts and ideas create a foundation to democracy. This Bill aims to crush freedom of speech. This bill will censor many individuals, it means science will no longer be able to debate and change due to censorship and individuals will no longer be able to question and challenge the status quo. This Bill is a clear pathway to totalitarianism, a censoring Government is no longer acting in a democratic way. United States of America has recently condemned similar censorship in defense of democracy.

Censorship is about silencing our voices, dissent and political diversity. This silencing will only lead our Country down a path towards communism and tyranny. Our great nation needs to encourage creativity, problem solving and critical thinking skills, collaboration and freedom to fully participate in all aspects of communication to prosper. I fear the bill will censor and silence the people of Australia.

The bill assumes we are unable to research and think critically for ourselves and will lead to fear of speaking up, raising concerns or sharing ideas. We need to be able to look at research/data and use our own experiences, knowledge and

judgements to form what we consider truth. We need to be able to express ourselves and bring together a proliferation of ideas without fear of censorship. A democratic society is one that allows freedom to have an opinion that is different from the rhetoric of what one person wants to dictate to us, this is a right we have in our nation.

A Democratic Government should be supporting the freedom of an individual to articulate their ideas and opinions, test theories, question, criticize and raise different viewpoints.

In conclusion I strongly oppose this Bill as it betrays a fundamental lack of understanding for the freedom of speech, expression and human rights of all Australians and will only lead to the death of democracy in Australia.

30 July 2023

Sincerely

Danielle Sanders