

The right to free speech is critical for a democratic society. These proposed powers and a direct assault on this most basic human right.

Misinformation and disinformation are actually “weasel words”. They mean whatever the user wants them to mean.

The antidote to the spreading of statements that are untrue or wrong is to respond to them with clear evidence and arguments to show that they are wrong or not true. In an environment of free speech this will happen.

During the pandemic a number of statements were labelled misinformation or disinformation. Some of these statements were untrue, but some of them have also in time proved to be true. The restriction of speech has resulted in a number of people I have met embracing ridiculous and extreme positions because of the distrust this censorship has caused. It is actually more dangerous to censor than to allow everyone to speak.

It's important to note that a measure like this can be powerfully used by the current political power to hinder any rivals. However those now in power may find themselves on the receiving end of their own legislation in the future.

Please reject this harmful legislation. It is not needed and it tramples over the most basic human rights.