

I am very concerned about the vague nature of the Misinformation and Disinformation Bill.

This bill will depend on the opinion of the fact checker and “serious harm” is open to subjective interpretation.

A few examples of my concern are. Incitement to commit hate crimes is a matter for criminal law. Make this a specific offence in the criminal law in states and territories and don't leave it to a subjective interpretation to Facebook or another website.

Vandalising critical communications infrastructure is already a criminal offence, you don't need some vague misinformation law to deal with that issue.

Offences related to misinformation undermining impartiality of an Australian electoral management body. There are laws relating to electoral offences at the present time and if they don't go far enough then make a specific law regarding this, don't leave it to subjective interpretation of Facebook etc.

The bill is vague and imprecise. There should be specific laws subject to specific offences. If a post is taken down there is no means of appeal, no transparency and no understanding of why it was taken down.

This bill allows a government agency to decide on a code of ethics and conduct for social media platforms. It is very subjective and mindful of the popular opinion of the day. It isn't mindful of a fair and free expression of speech which is the mark of a democracy, which respectfully allows disagreement of opinions with others. The dignity and liberty of the individual is to be able express an opinion even if those opinions disagree with others in the society. If this bill is passed it would be a major undermining of our democracy. This is also an assault on free speech, and cuts against the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Sections 18 and 19 of which Australia is a signatory.