

The Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

I am writing to explain why **I do not support** The Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023.

This Bill would lead to the government defining what the truth is and give power to the Australian Communications and Media Authority and online platforms to enforce it.

This bill would result in the government being the ultimate authority of truth, and anyone who disagrees with that 'truth' would be censored and / or punished.

The rules would not apply to the government and mainstream media, even if they share or promote information that is not correct – which is often the case, especially the media.

It would also lead to digital companies self-censoring the valid views of Australians to avoid the risk of huge fines.

The definitions of disinformation and misinformation are not clear and open to interpretation.

It is not clear who determines what information is false or misleading, and how independent this process will be.

It would mean what information I receive and how I receive it, is to be controlled paternalistically.


In a democracy and a free country, people must be able to receive information from a range of sources and draw their own conclusions. People need to be supported to develop critical thinking skills about the information that is available – they can consider the source of the information, if the source is credible, what other support or debate there is etc.

We need firm, robust debate and I do not support a Bill that will allow my information sources to be curated based on what the government wants me to know or not know.

As a health professional, I have seen this type of censorship firsthand – clinicians used their professional judgement, research, and critical thinking skills to support clients in an individualised way, but if their management or advice didn't align with the government mantra at the time, these clinicians were censored and/or expelled from their organisations – despite a wealth of information to support their treatment plan.

And other very timely examples include social media platforms censoring information about The Voice to Parliament and about the recent pandemic in terms of health outcomes and data.

No Government should limit freedom of speech.

Tanya H, 

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