

Censorship and silencing of ideas that differ to the official stance of government will stifle innovation and growth in our nation. Imagine if the ideas and inventions which have led to forms of alternative energy or new medical treatments had been censored, simply because they were not the same old ideas. New ideas and innovation do not just come from Government-approved “experts”, Government-approved Universities or Government-approved media. Innovation comes from the people. Censorship of alternative ideas and opinions is a dangerous, backward step for a country that intends to grow and mature in its development.

I ask, why would a free, democratic, and educated nation, like Australia, need this kind of censorship? Silly ideas, false ideas, even dangerous ideas have always existed, but the Australian government has never felt the need, before now, to “nanny” its citizens and “hide” these ideas.

Australians are intelligent enough to discern the truth from mis or dis information, if given the opportunity, and they must not have this opportunity legislated away from them through censorship. This kind of censorship of anything besides the government’s voice is characteristic of a dictatorship, rather than a democracy. Australians do not need politically motivated “experts” to tell them how to think. If the government’s message is truth, then it will speak for itself and need not fear competing, dissenting, or differing opinions.

The only real reason Australians would turn to the opinions of others voiced on social media is because they have lost trust in the voice of their government. This trust cannot be restored through censorship of differing views. The government must earn this trust through enabling complete and utter transparency, and continued freedom of speech and opinion.

Please reject the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023.