

The premise for the bill is that: "Misinformation and disinformation pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of Australians, as well as to our democracy, society and economy."

This is not a fact, it is highly disputable. I, and many others, would argue that increasingly top-down control of public communication is the biggest threat to democracy, society and the economy today. There is absolutely no need for this bill, unless the bill is intended to provide more power to bureaucrats and politicians and to create more inappropriate collusion between industry and government .

Some (but not all) of specific concerns with the bill:

1. The current definitions of 'Misinformation', 'Disinformation' and 'Serious Harm' within the Bill are unworkable. Given that the Bill rests upon these definitions, this renders the Bill itself unworkable. The definitions should be amended such that they are not contingent on the identification of "truth", but are rather aimed at capturing content that is of a criminal character, or which constitutes a criminal offence.
2. If the Bill is to be allowed to pass, stronger protections for free speech must be incorporated into it, which would require a drastic re-drafting of the Bill. Anything less should not be allowed, because freedom of speech and expression are such fundamental rights in our democracy. This is especially salient given the bill purports to aim to protect democracy.

This Bill has already contributed to undermined trust in government in Australia, it's passing would obliterate any small amount that remains. We need more open discussion in Australia, not less. We need more free speech protections enshrined in law, not attacks against it. If thus Bill focused specifically on criminal activity (instead of seeking to criminalise open discourse that doesn't support government-approved messages) that would be a positive. We need more pressure on social media companies to protect all Australians, and in particular our children, from criminal activity, not from debate and speculation around culturally relevant issues.

I do NOT support this bill.