

Misinformation and Disinformation Bill 2023.

We wish to make a submission regarding the proposed Misinformation and Disinformation bill.

The proposed bill is an attempt at an extreme form of censorship.

The sharing and debating topics of general interest should be encouraged in a democratic society. The government needs to establish rules around what constitutes healthy debate, e.g., no name-calling or personal slurs.

Rather than policing free speech, the platform operator should put a disclaimer that the information on their site cannot be verified and so should be read accordingly or alternatively put a reference to the author.

Australian Governments have many times in the past been petitioned to regulate the content of the internet and other forms of media with regard to pornography and have consistently failed to do so despite the massive weight of evidence to substantiate the harm that is caused across the spectrum of the community.

Australian Governments have failed to impact the ever-growing number of scams that proliferate the telecommunication/social media sector and cause ongoing actual harm to ordinary citizens.

Both of these very real issues have a significant negative impact on every Australian yet rather than deal with the criminal elements driving these, the Government intends to criminalize its own fair-minded citizens for discussing topics that matter to them. Ordinary Australians are having their rights restricted while those who make mischief or worse are given a leave pass.

This is undemocratic and un-Australian to the core.

We therefore say to you most emphatically **take your hands off our freedoms.**

This is not China or Russia or North Korea.

Free speech is just that. If it upsets someone then they are free to comment or clarify or oppose but people must always be free to share their opinion. All sides must be allowed to air their views in a respectful way so that the truth of the matter might be brought to light.

We oppose this proposed bill in its entirety.

Submitted by:

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