

Honourable Minister for Communications

I am opposed to any bill that restricts the freedom of speech. As an Australia with no right to freedom of speech or expression, I find the issues statement:

“Misinformation and disinformation pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of Australians, as well as to our democracy, society and economy” to be completely false and at odds with the maintenance of the limited freedom of speech I currently have.

I feel it is my responsibility to hear both “misinformation and disinformation” and make my own mind up about whether such labels can be applied to said information. Australians are some of the best educated people in the world. They have access to a breadth of information sources unimaginable only 10 years ago. There is good evidence that they use the various sources.

Allowing a government organisation the right to determine what is good information or what is bad information is very troubling. The current debate on the Voice to Parliament is a good example of how this would be a bad thing. Your government is strongly supportive of the Voice. However I have been able to hear another side to this argument. I have yet to decide how to vote. Our Prime Minister has been personally disparaging of those who do not hold his view. Clearly he feels the other side of the argument is misinformation. I would be very worried that if this bill had been in place the opposition to the incumbent government would not be heard. While it might be difficult for you to imagine being back in opposition, it seems likely that will be the case one day, and this bill may be used to help keep you there.

What Australians need is a right to free speech inserted in our constitution. I know there is no support for such a revolutionary idea in the Parliament, but that would be a real Voice to Parliament.

Please do not proceed with this bill.

Kind regards

Michael Knight

