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20/09/2023

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development,  
Communications and the Arts

Subject: Feedback on the Communications Legislation Amendment  
(Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the proposed  
Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating  
Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023.

This bill not only violates our fundamental human rights to freedom  
of speech but also creates an unjust distinction between different  
classes of citizens.

The Internet is a powerful tool for democratic expression, but this  
bill poses a significant risk to the freedom of expression of regular  
citizens. This bill undermines the democratic principles of equality  
and fairness. You are in effect establishing a ministry of truth, and  
imposing punishments so viewpoints that are contrary to the official  
narrative won't be tolerated. This is as tyrannical as the regimes we  
say are run by monsters, such as North Korea. You want, through  
this bill, to rob the people of the right to investigate, to discuss, to  
think about things and to draw our own conclusions. Regular  
citizens, who often possess valuable knowledge and insights,  
should not be subjected to censorship or disproportionately  
restricted in their ability to voice their opinions.

Regular citizens should not be forced by law to keep silent on our  
opinions when those opinions don't agree with the Government's

wishes. There are several controversies right now in Australia and world wide, where there is fundamental disagreement.

For example, the ludicrous push for men who self identify as women to gain access to women and girls' bathrooms, changing rooms, sporting events as competitors, etc. One side insists that self identified trans women are women, ignoring the fact that the majority of these people tend to be intact males. The other side argues that allowing biological males into women's spaces puts every woman in exactly the kind of danger that caused us to establish safe spaces in the first place.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] That is an important element of domestic violence. And yet these men who use coercive control against women in public are not held to account.

If the media determines what is true, we will be in the position that when the media openly lie about people and completely misrepresent events, nobody will be able to argue the point. According to this bill, what the journalists say will be true, regardless of the facts. I don't know about you, but I could fill Parliament House with material promoted by journalists that was discovered to be untrue. The same applies to politicians.

This is particularly relevant to the current battle where women are trying to prevent men from invading our safe spaces, our social clubs, our lesbian groups, our way of dressing and presenting ourselves, our language, etc etc. This is a major issue. Radical trans activists are violent, threatening, loud bullies who hate women. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The women are accused of

hate crimes for pointing out that these characters are biological males, who still have the equipment with which far too many of them commit heinous crimes.

This bill wants to shut down all debate and discussion. Women and children will not be allowed to protect ourselves by arguing against self ID, in any jurisdiction where it is in force. Dan Andrews threw down the gauntlet in Victoria, threatening repercussions for anyone who disagreed that a man who merely said he was a woman somehow magically became female. It would prohibit any speech that pointed out the biological fact that these people have XY chromosomes, have never been, are not now, and will never be female. That will be labelled hate speech and misinformation, when it is actually biological fact.

Earlier this year there was a Let Women Speak rally in Melbourne. This rally was gatecrashed by Nazis who had no affiliation with the group organising the women's event. The media lied about this event. They knowingly claimed that the women were affiliated with Nazis, which tacitly justified the violence that radical trans activists engaged in. The truth didn't matter to the Liberal Party in Victoria, who decided that Moira Deeming had unacceptable opinions (they insisted, falsely, that she was a Nazi) and therefore she should be banned.

Who determines what the truth is? Journalists? Don't be ridiculous. Politicians? They have their own agendas and they almost never act in the interests of voters. Two classes of proven liars will have the power to determine what is true and what is misinformation.

If you pass this bill, Moira Deeming will have no recourse when, yet again, bully boy men try to silence her by lying about her actions and using any pretext to shut this woman up.

This bill reeks of Nazi Germany 1937. I thought we had learned from that atrocity. It seems there is no end to politicians' greed for power. There is no end to politicians' efforts to harm the people who elected them.

Who are you serving? You are NOT serving democracy. You are NOT serving truth. You are NOT serving the interests of debate and discussion.

That is what cult leaders do. It is what dictators do. This is an egregious attempt to destroy our human rights. We didn't vote for it. If you put it to a referendum, it would be voted down.

If this bill passes, we may as well close down our schools and send children out into the workforce as soon as they can read and write. You have no interest in children learning HOW to think. This bill will forcibly instruct everyone WHAT to think. If you implement this fascist bill, there is no point in any education beyond the first grade.

This bill imposes excessive fines that will lead to digital services adopting more restrictive speech policies than ever before. The lack of "pressure escape valves" within the system only compounds the harm caused by this bill.

It is impossible to accurately judge what is true or untrue, as new information constantly emerges, contradicting previously accepted facts. History has provided numerous examples of authorities and experts being mistaken or changing their understanding of certain subjects, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and its related vaccines.

The proposed legislation's definition of misinformation is broad, encompassing information that is not necessarily false but may be "misleading" or "deceptive." What it demonises as misleading or deceptive is nothing more than an alternative opinion.

Freedom of speech is a fundamental right that allows for open, honest discussions, even when opinions differ. It is through this freedom that truth is ultimately discovered. Even experts, like Dr. Nick Coatsworth, a former Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Australia, have expressed concerns about the scope and application of this bill. Such dissent from reputable experts raises serious questions about the government's true intentions.

The bill's reliance on industry bodies creates a significant risk of anti-competitive practices by dominant digital services. The largest

players in the industry will have the ability to establish onerous codes that smaller competitors cannot comply with, effectively stifling competition and innovation. The recent examples of social media exodus, with users migrating to platforms with stricter misinformation policies, demonstrate that the free-market competition is already addressing the issue effectively.

The proposed legislation fails to consider the global nature of the internet, placing undue burdens on foreign website owners and potentially infringing on their rights. This bill's implementation could lead to censorship and fines for international website owners who are unaware of the Australian industry codes. Moreover, the threat of hauling ordinary citizens before ACMA and encouraging them to report on their friends and families is reminiscent of oppressive regimes rather than the principles of an open and democratic society.

I strongly believe that the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023 is a severe infringement upon the freedom of speech and liberty of Australian citizens. It divides the populace into two classes, unfairly favouring certain viewpoints while suppressing others. The bill unfairly empowers digital platforms and government-approved media, creating an environment that threatens independent journalism, free expression, and diverse viewpoints.

I urge you to reconsider putting this bill before Parliament and ensure that any legislation enacted respects the principles of free speech, democratic expression, and equality for all Australians. As it stands, this bill needs a total overhaul.

Yours sincerely,

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