

## Re: Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

As an Australian citizen, I believe that this bill will erode our freedom of speech.

There are many scientists, and experts in every field, whose opinions differ from those of other experts in the same field. Many times, throughout history, there have been beliefs that are strongly held as true, which centuries, decades, years, or even months later, are proven NOT to be true.

Healthy, respectful, and open discussions about any issue MUST be allowed, and we as citizens of a democratic country, have the right to form our own conclusions about the issues. We should NOT be prevented from expressing ourselves about any issues, nor be shielded from differing opinions. Neither should we be **forced** or **coerced** into believing something that is currently believed by the government of the day, just because their political interests demand it.

I'm sure we could all name countries where this happens, and where there is **NO** freedom of speech if it doesn't align with the views of those in power. I for one, never imagined that we would be facing such a future in a country like Australia, but I am deeply concerned that this bill is lurching us headlong into such a future. I demand that the government NOT proceed down this undemocratic and totalitarian path. I plead with you to protect our freedom of speech and the values this country has been built on.

Anonymous  
Melbourne, Victoria