

I do not support the proposed bill. In implementation it will result in more control of free speech by transferring powers to determine what is misinformation and disinformation to unaccountable administrative agencies.

Our liberal democracy was founded on the principal of free speech and the rule of law. If people have intentionally harmed and misled people, it should be dealt with by the appropriate law.

The definitions of misinformation and disinformation are imprecise and could be used to capture many instances of political dissent and genuine debate - two of the freedoms that have enable Australia to be a robust and prosperous democracy. This bill will diminish these fought for freedoms and ultimately weaken our democracy, which is why I oppose it.

The application of what is considered misinformation and disinformation is arbitrary and won't apply to misinformation from governments or media outlets. This is not acceptable. All should be accountable and should be made accountable in public, not decided by unaccountable administrative agencies and the anonymous fact checkers may be brought in to assist. Social media companies can censor information and views without any real foundation or on request, as was seen in the Twitter files, where people with legitimate views and debates were censored for information that is now known to be true.

There are no provisions about the openness and fairness of the process nor recourse for information that is fact checked as false but later shown to be true. Australians will not be exposed to views that are vital to stimulate debate in a dynamic liberal democracy.

This bill is not fit to proceed as the definitions are imprecise, open to subjective interpretation, will result in politically motivated censorship and the loss of free speech. The power to declare misinformation and disinformation by unaccountable administrative bodies breeds secrecy and is not a positive step to improve our democracy and protect Australians from harm.