

I write in response to the ACMA's request for feedback on the proposed Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023 (the Bill).

Freedom of speech and expression are fundamental rights in a democracy. This proposed bill to restrict free speech is a severe overreach of authority and a danger to our democracy as it will stifle public debate and criticism on government and their policies. It will only cause damage to society and further the mistrust in governments. It is what we accuse China and other authoritarian regimes of. More debate on differing opinions/facts should be encouraged, not silenced.

Who gets to determine what is misinformation or disinformation and what is the truth?

Determining what qualifies as so-called 'misinformation' is subjective. So-called mis/disinformation, unless it incites violence, does not cause direct harm. Australia already has laws to deal with incitement to violence.

The past three years have shown that many things declared as 'fake news' one day end up being proven truthful several months later. One of the biggest lies told to the public by government and health authorities was that Ivermectin was only a "horse paste" and should not be used as a treatment for Covid-19. This drug has been used safely for human use for approximately 60 years and numerous studies has shown its effectiveness at treating Covid. Many lives could have been saved.

We were bombarded by governments, health authorities and MSN to go get your PCR test, run at a cycle threshold so high, it was guaranteed to show false positives in many people without any symptoms. thereby inflating Covid case numbers. The outcome generated a level of fear among much of the public.

Governments and health authorities misinformed us about the need and effectiveness of wearing masks. Numerous studies say otherwise.

Federal government and our health authorities assured citizens that the vaccine

would protect us personally and would stop transmission - lies. Has shown to be neither effective at stopping infection or stopping transmission, but has in fact caused harm, and deaths. The mantra “safe and effective” is a lie.

Hate speech and derision was allowed by government and social media directed at anyone who was reluctant to submit to a Covid19 vaccine.

Many small businesses were crushed as a result of government mis/disinformation.

Social media censored the posts from those who unfortunately were seriously injured by the vaccine, so the public would not be alerted to serious side effects. Reports of deaths after vaccine were banned on social media.

Eminent highly qualified scientists, virologists, and immunologists' voices were ignored and silenced. Doctors were harassed, deplatformed, even barred from practicing. Peer-reviewed papers were not allowed to be posted.

People have been being accused of misinformation but have later proven to be correct.

I note that governments, federal, state and local, health bureaucrats and MSN will be exempt from the provisions of mis/disinformation in the bill, yet they are the very voices we cannot trust regarding their current truths.

In a democracy it is not the role of government to stifle free speech, irrespective if anyone is offended.

ACMA and the Federal Government should not have any say in censoring Australians on any issue, even if they are wrong or misinformed.

I am fundamentally and vehemently opposed to this Bill. Australians do not need it, nor want it. Please abandon it.

Thank you for your consideration.