

The Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023 bill should not be approved.

I completely understand the multitude of types of harm which can be, and have been, caused by misinformation and disinformation.

Censorship is not the answer. It can also backfire dangerously. By silencing groups' voices, those voices become further divided, corralled in their tranches, thus increasing the proliferation of misinformation.

Any attempts to combat misinformation need to prevent the control of information becoming hijacked by conflicts of interest.

The academic literature and *clear as day* evidence tells us that the solution is to encourage an active and well-informed population, empowered to think.

The onerous task of keeping a population calm during the pandemic, led to our Department of Home Affairs employing tactics to suppress truthful information, falsely labelling it as misinformation and thus inadvertently perpetrating several wrongs.

Again, it is my recommendation that the bill should not be approved.