

I am concerned that the powers granted to ACMA could be misused to suppress both legitimate speech and respectfully dissenting opinions. Freedom of speech is essential for a thriving democracy, as it encourages open debate, the exchange of ideas, and the ability to provide feedback and hold those in power accountable to those they represent.

By granting the ACMA the authority to enforce measures against misinformation and disinformation, I am concerned about a negative impact on public discourse, where the people of Australia may become hesitant to express their opinions or to engage in controversial discussions, hindering the diversity of perspectives necessary for a healthy democracy, which could have dangerous and long-lasting impacts on the basic freedoms of individuals. Without robust safeguards and clear definitions, there is a danger of legislative overreach and subjective enforcement of implementation measures.

Determining what content falls under the categories of misinformation and disinformation can be highly subjective and open to interpretation. This subjectivity leaves room for potential abuse and discrimination unless transparent guidelines are established, ensuring all citizens' rights to freedom of speech, which the Federal Government is covenanted into protecting.

The proposed Communications Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 could have unintended negative consequences in that it may have a paralysing effect on innovation, creativity, and the free flow of information, hindering the positive contributions of online platforms and stifling the progress of the many thinking individuals we have in our society.

I am respectfully ask that you represent my will with regard to this important upcoming proposed bill, which is a brazen imposition on our rights, and I urge you oppose the bill and to point out with clarity the backward step Australia would be taking should this legislation go ahead. Thank you.