

Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

I strongly disagree with the implementation of this Bill for the following reasons:

1. Suppressing information of any kind is suppressing free speech. Information is constantly changing; some is reliable and some is not. How does suppressing information help Australians?

2. A healthy democracy needs freedom of speech where ideas can be discussed and debated, and previously unseen solutions found.

3. Fringe views rarely gain momentum. People should be allowed to be exposed to all discussions on a topic and then decide for themselves what to believe. We need a market place of ideas in order to get a broad view of a topic.

4. Governments and their authorized bodies should never be given the power to decide what is or is not true. Governments have lied in the past (Tampa, Weapons of Mass destruction).

5. This new Bill will allow ACMA to impose significant penalties on social media platforms (and individuals using those platforms) if they allow perceived misinformation/disinformation. Senator Alex Antic has discovered through Freedom of Information that the Australian government intervened 4000 times to restrict or censor posts on various social media platforms about Covid-19, many of which have since been shown to be correct. This must not happen again.