

Dear Misinformation Bill Review,

The proposed 'Misinformation Bill' is wrongheaded and dangerous.

Free speech, and open, respectful debate on all topics is crucial to boost and ensure the intelligence of a society. It is pretty sad when a society succumbs to 'groupthink'. It is especially worrying when a government tries to control or restrict free speech and debate - this is not a sign of democracy but a sign of an emerging totalitarian mindset. A democratic government should be encouraging their people to have open respectful debates.

Even social media companies such as Meta and Twitter have voiced their concerns over the proposed law because it's easy to see how the power given to the ACMA could be abused. Meta said that the law would have a "chilling" effect on free speech. It would be easy for a government to label as "misinformation" anything that could hurt its reputation (as many authoritarian governments already do). Giving the government such unrestricted power is terrifying.

Sorting fact from fiction is not always easy. What someone thinks is true might be what someone else thinks is false. We need debate and the free flow of information to consider ideas and arrive at the truth. Censoring debate stops this vital process.

It's easy to see how governments could abuse these proposed powers to censor truthful content they found inconvenient. The proposed law can and will do incredible damage if it's allowed to be passed.

Please reject this proposed law.

