

Dear Misinformation Bill Review,

The body of this email (below) has been provided for me to send in my submission. I have read it carefully and I identify closely with the message that is being sent. As a member of the Australian society who has watched social influences come and go for years, I am alarmed at the climate of shame and blame and guilt that now pervades our institutions and media in an attempt to keep us quiet about issues relating to our personal conscience and our own ethical platforms. A point of difference in opinion is now conveniently defined as 'hate speech' in an attempt to make us keep our mouths shut. I don't hate anyone - but do reserve the right to voice my honest (well evaluated) opinion on a range of social issues. Free speech is a basic human right. It is not 'hate speech'! And I'm wondering how long it will be before legislation is passed to actually throw some of us into jail for speaking up about our basic beliefs.

George Orwell foresaw that our society would be coming to this point in his insightful '1984'. Big Government is slowly becoming Big Brother in our once laid-back Australian society (reference Premier Dan Andrews denying parents the right to counsel children on gender issues). And you can be sure that any future vote I cast will not be for a Big Brother regime.

Freedom of speech is a fundamental right of every Australian. This proposed "misinformation" law is an attack on our basic human rights by a government that is supposed to uphold those rights, not stifle them.

The government is attempting to place upon itself an impossible burden of objectivity. No government body has the wisdom or ability to sort out what is true and what isn't. We've never had so much information available at our fingertips in all of human history. The amount of information that can be accessed online is incredibly vast. What group of bureaucrats could possibly discern truth from falsehood on every subject?

The bill's stated aim is to keep Australians from "harm". Preventing harm is a good thing. The problem is that the proposed law will ultimately do great harm itself. One example is the recent pandemic and the question of where COVID-19 originated. The official line was that it came from nature and that the lab origin was "misinformation" that could "harm" our relationship with China.

Now we have learned that the virus likely did come from the Wuhan lab. What was once called "misinformation" is now quite possibly the truth! The question of COVID-19's origin is vital so that we can avoid a repeat scenario. Censoring truthful reporting about the lab leak theory will itself cause "harm" by preventing us from learning from our mistakes.

With this one example, we can see how the proposed "misinformation" law will increase "harm" even as it seeks to reduce it.

The bill is misguided and must be rejected.

